

# Chess Openings

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# Chapter 1

## Overview

### 1.1 Chess opening

For a list of openings as classified by the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, see [List of chess openings](#).

The starting position of [chess](#)

A **chess opening** is the group of initial moves of a [chess game](#). Recognized sequences of initial moves are referred to as **openings** by [White](#), or **defenses** by [Black](#), but *opening* is also used as the general term. There are many dozens of different openings, and hundreds of named variants. *The Oxford Companion to Chess* lists 1,327 named openings and variants.<sup>[1]</sup> These vary widely in character from quiet [positional play](#) to wild [tactical play](#). In addition to referring to specific move sequences, the opening is the first phase of a chess game, the other phases being the [middlegame](#) and the [endgame](#).

A sequence of opening moves that is considered standard (often catalogued in a reference work such as the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*) is referred to as “the book moves”, or simply “book”. These reference works often present these move sequences in simple [algebraic notation](#), opening trees, or [theory tables](#). When a game begins to deviate from known [opening theory](#), the players are said to be “out of book”. In some opening lines, the moves considered best for both sides have been worked out for twenty to twenty-five moves or more. Some analysis goes to thirty or thirty-five moves, as in the classical [King’s Indian Defense](#) and in the [Sveshnikov](#) and [Najdorf](#) variations of the [Sicilian Defense](#).<sup>[2]</sup> Professional chess players spend years studying openings, and continue doing so throughout their careers, as opening theory continues to evolve. Players at the club level also study openings but the importance of the opening phase is smaller there since games are rarely decided in the opening. The study of openings can become unbalanced if it is to the exclusion of tactical training and [middlegame](#) and [endgame](#) strategy.<sup>[3]</sup>

A new sequence of moves in the opening is referred to as a *theoretical novelty*. When kept secret until used in a com-

petitive game it is often known as a *prepared variation*, a powerful weapon in top-class competition.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### 1.1.1 Aims of the opening

##### Common aims in opening play

Irrespective of whether they are trying to gain the upper hand as [White](#) and equalize as [Black](#) or to create dynamic imbalances, players generally devote a lot of attention in the opening stages to:<sup>[5]</sup>

1. **Development:** One of the main aims of the opening is to mobilize the pieces on useful squares where they will have impact on the game. To this end, knights are usually developed to f3, c3, f6 and c6 (or sometimes e2, d2, e7 or d7), and both players’ king and queen pawns are moved so the bishops can be developed (alternatively, the bishops may be *fianchettoed* with a maneuver such as g3 and Bg2). Rapid mobilization is the key. The queen, and to a lesser extent the rooks, are not usually played to a central position until later in the game, when many [minor pieces](#) and pawns are no longer present.
2. **Control of the center:** At the start of the game, it is not clear on which part of the board the pieces will be needed. However, control of the central squares allows pieces to be moved to any part of the board relatively easily, and can also have a cramping effect on the opponent. The classical view is that central control is best effected by placing [pawns](#) there, ideally establishing pawns on d4 and e4 (or d5 and e5 for [Black](#)). However, the [hypermodern](#) school showed that it was not always necessary or even desirable to occupy the center in this way, and that too broad a pawn front could be attacked and destroyed, leaving its architect vulnerable; an impressive-looking pawn center is worth little unless it can be maintained. The hypermoderns instead advocated controlling the center from a distance with pieces, breaking down one’s

opponent's center, and only taking over the center oneself later in the game. This leads to openings such as **Alekhine's Defense** – in a line like 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4 (the *Four Pawns Attack*), White has a formidable pawn center for the moment, but Black hopes to undermine it later in the game, leaving White's position exposed.

3. **King safety:** The king is somewhat exposed in the middle of the board. Measures must be taken to reduce his vulnerability. It is therefore common for both players either to **castle** in the opening (simultaneously developing one of the rooks) or to otherwise bring the king to the side of the board via **artificial castling**.
4. **Prevention of pawn weakness:** Most openings strive to avoid the creation of pawn weaknesses such as **isolated, doubled and backward pawns**, pawn islands, etc. Some openings sacrifice **endgame** considerations for a quick attack on the opponent's position. Some unbalanced openings for Black, in particular, make use of this idea, such as the Dutch and the Sicilian. Other openings, such as the Alekhine and the Benoni, invite the opponent to overextend and form pawn weaknesses. Specific openings accept pawn weaknesses in exchange for compensation in the form of dynamic play. (See **Pawn structure**.)
5. **Piece coordination:** As the players mobilize their pieces, they both seek to ensure that they are working harmoniously towards the control of key squares.
6. **Create positions in which the player is more comfortable than the opponent:** **Transposition** is one common way of doing this.<sup>[6][7]</sup>

Apart from these ideas, other strategies used in the **middlegame** may also be carried out in the opening. These include preparing pawn breaks to create counterplay, creating weaknesses in the opponent's pawn structure, seizing control of key squares, making favourable exchanges of minor pieces (e.g. gaining the bishop pair), or gaining a space advantage, whether in the centre or on the flanks.

### Top-level objectives

At higher levels of competition, for many years the main objectives of opening play were to obtain the better position when playing as White and to equalize when playing as Black. The idea behind this is that playing first **gives White a slight initial advantage**; for example, White will be the first to attack if the game opens symmetrically (Black mirrors White's moves).<sup>[5]</sup>

Since about the 1950s another objective has gradually become more dominant. According to IM Jeremy Silman,

the purpose of the opening is to create dynamic imbalances between the two sides, which will determine the character of the middlegame and the strategic plans chosen by both sides.<sup>[8]</sup> For example, in the main line of the **Winawer Variation** of the French Defense (1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3), White will try to use his **bishop pair** and **space** advantage to mount an attack on Black's **kingside**, while Black will seek simplifying **exchanges** (in particular, trading off one of White's bishops to blunt this advantage) and counterattack against the weakened pawns on White's **queenside**; both players accept different combinations of advantages and disadvantages. This idea was a doctrine of the **Soviet school of chess**.

A third objective, which is complementary to the previous ones and has been common since the 19th century, is to lure the opponent into positions with which the player is more familiar and comfortable than the opponent. This is usually done by **transpositions**, in which a game that apparently starts with one opening can reach a position that is normally produced by a different opening.<sup>[6][7]</sup>

### 1.1.2 Opening repertoires

The Perenyi Attack, which arises from the opening moves 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e6 7.g4 e5 8.Nf5 g6 9.g5 gxf5 10.exf5 d5 11.Qf3 d4. Played several times between grandmasters, but Lars Bo Hansen does not recommend this to amateurs.

Most players realize after a while that they play certain types of positions better than others, and that the amount of theory they can learn is limited. Therefore, most players specialize in certain openings where they know the theory and which lead to positions which they favor. The set of openings a player has specialized in is called an opening repertoire. The main elements a player needs to consider in a repertoire are:

- As White, whether to open with 1.e4, 1.d4, 1.c4, or 1.Nf3
- As Black, a defense against any of these openings

A very narrow repertoire allows for deeper specialization but also makes a player less flexible to vary against different opponents. In addition, opponents may find it easier to prepare against a player with a narrow repertoire.<sup>[9]</sup>

The main openings in a repertoire are usually reasonably sound, that is, they should lead to playable positions even against optimal counterplay. Unsound **gambits** are sometimes used as surprise weapons, but are unreliable for a stable repertoire. Repertoires often change as a player devel-

ops, and a player's advancement may be stifled if the opening repertoire does not evolve. Some openings which are effective against amateur players are less effective at the master level. For example Black obtains active play in return for a pawn in the **Benko Gambit**; amateur players may have trouble defending against Black's activity, while masters are more skilled at defending and making use of the extra pawn. Some openings which are played between grandmasters are so complex and theoretical that amateur players will have trouble understanding them. An example is the Perenyi Attack of the **Sicilian Defense** (see diagram) which yields an immensely complicated and tactical position that even strong players have difficulty handling, and that is beyond the comprehension of most amateurs.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 1.1.3 Opening nomenclature

Major changes in the rules of chess in the late fifteenth century increased the speed of the game, consequently emphasizing the importance of opening study. Thus, early chess books, such as the 1497 text of **Luis Ramirez de Lucena**, present opening analysis, as does **Pedro Damiano** (1512), and **Ruy López de Segura** (1561). Ruy Lopez's disagreement with Damiano regarding the merits of 2...Nc6 led to 3.Bb5 (after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6) being named for him as the **Ruy Lopez** or *Spanish Opening*.<sup>[10]</sup> Opening theory was studied more scientifically from the 1840s on, and many opening variations were discovered and named in this period and later. Opening nomenclature developed haphazardly, and most names are historical accidents not based on systematic principles.

The oldest openings tend to be named for geographic places and people. Many openings are named after nationalities, for example Indian, English, Spanish, French, Dutch, Scotch, Russian, Italian, Scandinavian, and Sicilian. Cities are also used, such as Vienna, Berlin, and Wilkes-Barre. The **Catalan System** is named after the **Catalonia** region of Spain.

For a more comprehensive list, see **List of chess openings named after places**.

Chess players' names are the most common sources of opening names. The name given to an opening is not always that of the first player to adopt it; often an opening is named for the player who was the first to popularize it or to publish analysis of it. Eponymic openings include the **Ruy Lopez**, **Alekhine's Defense**, **Morphy Defense**, and the **Réti Opening**. Some opening names honor two people, such as the **Caro-Kann**.

For a more comprehensive list, see **List of chess openings named after people**.

A few opening names are descriptive, such as **Giuoco Piano** (Italian: *quiet game*). More prosaic descriptions include Two Knights and Four Knights. Descriptive names are less common than openings named for places and people.

Some openings have been given fanciful names, often names of animals. This practice became more common in the 20th century. By then, most of the more common and traditional sequences of opening moves had already been named, so these tend to be unusual or recently developed openings like the Orangutan, Hippopotamus, Elephant, and Hedgehog.

Many terms are used for the opening as well. In addition to Opening, common terms include Game, Defense, Gambit, and Variation; less common terms are System, Attack, Counterattack, Countergambit, Reversed, and Inverted. To make matters more confusing, these terms are used very inconsistently. Consider some of the openings named for nationalities: **Scotch Game**, **English Opening**, **French Defense**, and **Russian Game**—the Scotch Game and the English Opening are both White openings (White chooses to play), the French is indeed a defense but so is the Russian Game. Although these do not have precise definitions, here are some general observations about how they are used.

**Game** Used only for some of the oldest openings, for example **Scotch Game**, **Vienna Game**, and **Four Knights Game**.

**Opening** Along with Variation, this is the most common term.

**Variation** Usually used to describe a line within a more general opening, for example the Exchange Variation of the **Queen's Gambit Declined**.

**Defense** Always refers to an opening chosen by Black, such as **Two Knights Defense** or **King's Indian Defense**, unless, of course, it has 'reversed' in front of it, which makes it an opening for White. The term "defense" does not imply passivity; many defenses are quite aggressive (such as the **King's Indian Defence**).

**Gambit** An opening that involves the sacrifice of material, usually one or more pawns. Gambits can be played by White (e.g., **King's Gambit**) or Black (e.g., **Latvian Gambit**). The full name often includes *Accepted* or *Declined* depending on whether the opponent took the offered material, as in the **Queen's Gambit Accepted** and **Queen's Gambit Declined**. In some cases, the sacrifice of material is only temporary. The Queen's Gambit is not a true gambit because there is no good way for Black to keep the pawn (Ward 1999:10).

**Counter gambit** A gambit played in response to another gambit, almost always by Black. Examples of this include the **Albin Counter gambit** to the **Queen's Gambit**, the **Falkbeer Counter gambit** to the **King's Gambit**, and the **Greco Counter Gambit** (the former name of the **Latvian Gambit**).

**System** A method of development that can be used against many different setups by the opponent. Examples include **London System**, **Colle System**, **Stonewall Attack**, **Réti System**, **Barcza System**, and **Hedgehog System**.

**Attack** Sometimes used to describe an aggressive or provocative variation such as the **Albin–Chatard Attack** (or **Chatard–Alekhine Attack**), the **Fried Liver Attack** in the **Two Knights Defense**, and the **Grob Attack**. In other cases it refers to a defensive system by Black when adopted by White, as in **King's Indian Attack**. In still other cases the name seems to be used ironically, as with the fairly inoffensive **Durkin's Attack** (also called the **Durkin Opening**).

**Reversed, Inverted** A Black opening played by White, or more rarely a White opening played by Black. Examples include **Sicilian Reversed** (from the **English Opening**), and the **Inverted Hungarian**. The **Reti**, **King's Indian Attack** and **Reversed Sicilian** (from the **English**), and other “Black played by White with an extra tempo,” often start with 1.Nf3 or 1.c4.<sup>[11]</sup>

A small minority of openings are prefixed with “Anti-”. These are openings intended to avoid a particular line otherwise available to one's opponent, for example the **Anti-Marshall** (against the **Marshall (Counter) Attack** in the **Ruy Lopez**) and the **Anti-Meran Gambit** (against the **Meran Variation** of the **Semi-Slav Defense**).

### 1.1.4 Classification of chess openings

For a list of openings as classified by the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, see **List of chess openings**.

The beginning chess position offers White twenty possible first moves. Of these, 1.e4, 1.d4, 1.Nf3, and 1.c4 are by far the most popular as these moves do the most to promote rapid development and control of the center. A few other opening moves are considered reasonable but less consistent with opening principles than the four most popular moves. The **Dunst Opening**, 1.Nc3, develops a knight to a good square, but is somewhat inflexible because it blocks White's c-pawn; also, after 1...d5 the knight is liable to be driven to an inferior square by ...d4. (Note that after 1.Nf3 the analogous 1...e5? loses a pawn.) **Bird's Opening**, 1.f4, addresses

center control but not development and weakens the king position slightly. The **Sokolsky Opening** 1.b4 and the **King's and Queen's fianchettoes**: **Larsen's Opening** 1.b3 and 1.g3 aid development a bit, but they only address center control peripherally and are slower than the more popular openings. The eleven remaining possibilities are rarely played at the top levels of chess. Of these, the best are merely slow such as 1.c3, 1.d3, and 1.e3. Worse possibilities either ignore the center and development such as 1.a3, weaken White's position (for instance, 1.f3 and 1.g4), or place the knights on poor squares (1.Na3 and 1.Nh3).

Black has twenty possible responses to White's opening move. Many of these are mirror images of the most popular first moves for White, but with one less tempo. Defenses beginning with 1...c6 and 1...e6, often followed by the center thrust 2...d5, are also popular. Defenses with an early ...d6 coupled with a **kingside fianchetto** are also commonly played.

The most important scheme of classifying chess openings for serious players is by **ECO code**, a series of 500 opening codes assigned by the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*. Although these codes are invaluable for the serious study of the chess opening, they are not very practical for a broad survey of the chess opening as the codes obscure common structural features between related openings.

A simple descriptive categorization of the chess opening is **King's Pawn Openings**, **Queen's Pawn Openings**, and **Others**. Since these categories are still individually very large, it is common to divide each of them further. One reasonable way to group the openings is:

- **Double King Pawn, Symmetric or Open Games** (1.e4 e5)<sup>[12]</sup>
- **Single King Pawn or Semi-Open Games** (1.e4 other)
- **Double Queen Pawn or Closed Games** (1.d4 d5)
- **Single Queen Pawn or Semi-Closed Games** (1.d4 other)
- **Flank openings** (including 1.c4, 1.Nf3, 1.f4, and others)
- **Unusual first moves for White**

The **Indian systems** (1.d4 Nf6) are the most important<sup>[13]</sup> of the **Semi-Closed Games**, and warrant separate treatment.

#### Open games: 1.e4 e5

##### Open Game

**Ruy Lopez**: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

**Italian Game**: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4

Giuoco Piano: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5

Two Knights Defense: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6

Scotch Game: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4

Petrov's Defense: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6

King's Gambit: 1.e4 e5 2.f4

Vienna Game: 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3

Bishop's Opening: 1.e4 e5 2.Bc4

Main article: [Open Game](#)

White starts by playing 1.e4 (moving his king pawn two spaces). This is the most popular opening move and it has many strengths—it immediately works on controlling the center, and it frees two pieces (the queen and a bishop). The oldest openings in chess follow 1.e4. [Bobby Fischer](#) rated 1.e4 as “Best by test.” On the downside, 1.e4 places a pawn on an undefended square and weakens d4 and f4; the Hungarian master [Gyula Breyer](#) melodramatically declared that “After 1.e4 White's game is in its last throes.” If Black mirrors White's move and replies with 1...e5, the result is an open game.

The most popular second move for White is 2.Nf3 attacking Black's king pawn, preparing for a kingside castle, and anticipating the advance of the queen pawn to d4. Black's most common reply is 2...Nc6, which usually leads to the [Ruy Lopez](#) (3.Bb5), [Scotch Game](#) (3.d4), or [Italian Game](#) (3.Bc4). If Black instead maintains symmetry and counterattacks White's center with 2...Nf6 then the [Petrov's Defense](#) results. The [Philidor Defense](#) (2...d6) is not popular in modern chess because it allows White an easy space advantage while Black's position remains cramped and passive, although solid. Other responses to 2.Nf3 are not seen in master play.

The most popular alternatives to 2.Nf3 are the [Vienna Game](#) (2.Nc3), the [Bishop's Opening](#) (2.Bc4), and the [King's Gambit](#) (2.f4). These openings have some similarities with each other, in particular the Bishop's Opening frequently transposes to variations of the Vienna Game. The King's Gambit was extremely popular in the 19th century. White sacrifices a pawn for quick development and to pull a black pawn out of the center. The Vienna Game also frequently features attacks on the Black center by means of a f2–f4 pawn advance.

In the [Center Game](#) (2.d4) White immediately opens the center but if the pawn is to be recovered after 2...exd4, White must contend with a slightly premature queen development after 3.Qxd4. An alternative is to sacrifice one or two pawns, for example in the [Danish Gambit](#).

Many other variations after 1.e4 e5 have been studied; see [Open Game](#) for details.

- 1.e4 e5 Double King's Pawn Opening or Open Game

- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 [Ruy Lopez](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 [Scotch Game](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 [Italian Game](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 [Four Knights Game](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 [Petrov's Defense](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 [Philidor Defense](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 [Vienna Game](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 [Bishop's Opening](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.f4 [King's Gambit](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.Qxd4 [Center Game](#)
- 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 [Danish Gambit](#)

### Semi-open games: 1.e4, Black plays other than 1...e5

[Sicilian Defense](#)

[French Defense](#)

[Caro–Kann Defense](#)

[Alekhine's Defense](#)

[Pirc Defense](#)

[Modern Defense](#)

[Scandinavian Defense](#)

[Nimzowitsch Defense](#)

Main article: [Semi-Open Game](#)

In the semi-open games White plays 1.e4 and Black breaks symmetry immediately by replying with a move other than 1...e5. The most popular Black defense to 1.e4 is the [Sicilian](#) (1...c5), but the [French](#) (1...e6, normally followed by 2.d4 d5) and the [Caro–Kann](#) (1...c6, normally followed by 2.d4 d5) are also very popular. The [Pirc](#) and the [Modern](#) are closely related openings that are also often seen, while the [Alekhine](#) and the [Scandinavian](#) have made occasional appearances in [World Chess Championship](#) games.

The Sicilian and French Defenses lead to unbalanced positions that can offer exciting play with both sides having chances to win. The Caro–Kann Defense is solid as Black intends to use his c-pawn to support his center (1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5). Alekhine's, the Pirc and the Modern are [hypermodern](#) openings in which Black tempts White to build a large center with the goal of attacking it with pieces.

Other semi-open games have been studied but are less common; see [Semi-Open Game](#) for details.

- 1.e4 c5 [Sicilian Defense](#)
- 1.e4 e6 [French Defense](#)

- 1.e4 c6 **Caro–Kann Defense**
- 1.e4 d5 **Scandinavian Defense** (also known as the Center Counter defense)
- 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 **Pirc Defense**
- 1.e4 Nf6 **Alekhine’s Defense**
- 1.e4 g6 **Modern Defense**

### Closed games: 1.d4 d5

#### Closed Game

Queen’s Gambit: 1.d4 d5 2.c4

Queen’s Gambit Declined: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6

Slav Defense: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6

Queen’s Gambit Accepted: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4

Colle System: 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3

London System: 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4

Torre Attack: 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bg5

Main article: **Closed Game**

The openings classified as closed games begin 1.d4 d5. The move 1.d4 offers the same benefits to development and center control as does 1.e4, but unlike with King Pawn openings where the e4-pawn is undefended after the first move, the d4-pawn is protected by White’s queen. This slight difference has a tremendous effect on the opening. For instance, whereas the **King’s Gambit** is rarely played today at the highest levels of chess, the **Queen’s Gambit** remains a popular weapon at all levels of play. Also, compared with the King Pawn openings, transpositions among variations are more common and critical in the closed games.

The most important closed openings are in the Queen’s Gambit family (White plays 2.c4). The Queen’s Gambit is somewhat misnamed, since White can always regain the offered pawn if desired. In the **Queen’s Gambit Accepted**, Black plays ...dxc4, giving up the center for free development and the chance to try to give White an isolated queen pawn with a subsequent ...c5 and ...cxd5. White will get active pieces and possibilities for the attack. Black has two popular ways to decline the pawn, the **Slav** (2...c6) and the **Queen’s Gambit Declined** (2...e6). Both of these moves lead to an immense forest of variations that can require a great deal of opening study to play well. Among the many possibilities in the Queen’s Gambit Declined are the Orthodox Defense, Lasker’s Defense, the Cambridge Springs Defense, the Tartakower Variation, and the Tarrasch and Semi-Tarrasch Defenses. Black replies to the Queen’s Gambit other than 2...dxc4, 2...c6, and 2...e6 are uncommon.

The Colle System and Stonewall Attack are classified as Queen’s Pawn Games because White plays d4 but not c4.

They are also examples of *Systems*, rather than specific opening variations. White develops aiming for a particular formation without great concern over how Black chooses to defend. Both systems are popular with club players because they are easy to learn, but are rarely used by professionals because a well-prepared opponent playing Black can equalize fairly easily. The Stonewall is characterized by the White pawn formation on c3, d4, e3, and f4, and can be achieved by several move orders and against many different Black setups. The position in the diagram and the move sequence given below are typical.

Other closed openings have been studied but are less common; see **Closed Game** for details.

- 1.d4 d5 Double Queen’s Pawn Opening or **Closed Game**
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 **Queen’s Gambit**
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 **Queen’s Gambit Accepted** (QGA)
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 **Queen’s Gambit Declined** (QGD)
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 **Slav Defense**
- 1.d4 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.Bd3 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.f4 (a typical move sequence) **Stonewall Attack**
- 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 **Colle System**

### Indian Defense Systems: 1.d4 Nf6

#### Indian Defence

Nimzo-Indian Defence: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4

King’s Indian Defense: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7

Grünfeld Defense: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5

Queen’s Indian Defense: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6

Modern Benoni: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6

Budapest Gambit: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5

Old Indian Defense: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6

Main article: **Indian Defense**

The Indian systems are asymmetrical defenses to 1.d4 that employ hypermodern chess strategy. Fianchettoes are common in many of these openings. As with the closed games, **transpositions** are important and many of the Indian defenses can be reached by several different move orders. Although Indian defenses were championed in the 1920s by players in the hypermodern school, they were not fully accepted until Soviet players showed in the late 1940s that these systems are sound for Black. Since then, Indian defenses have been the most popular Black replies to 1.d4 because they offer an unbalanced game with chances for both sides. The usual White second move is 2.c4, grabbing a larger share of the center and allowing the move Nc3, to

prepare for moving the e-pawn to e4 without blocking the c-pawn. Black's most popular replies are:

- 2...e6, freeing the king's bishop and leading into the Nimzo-Indian Defence, Queen's Indian Defence, Bogo-Indian Defence, Modern Benoni, or regular lines of the **Queen's Gambit Declined**,
- 2...g6, preparing a fianchetto of the king's bishop and entering the King's Indian Defense or Grünfeld Defense, and
- 2...c5 3.d5 e6, the Modern Benoni, with an immediate counterpunch in the center.

Advocated by Nimzowitsch as early as 1913, the **Nimzo-Indian Defence** was the first of the Indian systems to gain full acceptance. It remains one of the most popular and well-respected defenses to 1.d4 and White often adopts move orders designed to avoid it. Black attacks the center with pieces and is prepared to trade a bishop for a knight to weaken White's queenside with doubled pawns.

The **King's Indian Defense** is aggressive, somewhat risky, and generally indicates that Black will not be satisfied with a draw. Although it was played occasionally as early as the late 19th century, the King's Indian was considered inferior until the 1940s, when it was taken up by Bronstein, Boleslavsky, and Reshevsky. Despite being Fischer's favored defense to 1.d4, its popularity faded in the mid-1970s. Kasparov's successes with the defense restored the King's Indian to prominence in the 1980s.

Ernst Grünfeld debuted the **Grünfeld Defense** in 1922. Distinguished by the move 3...d5, Grünfeld intended it as an improvement to the King's Indian which was not considered entirely satisfactory at that time. The Grünfeld has been adopted by World Champions Smyslov, Fischer, and Kasparov.

The **Queen's Indian Defense** is considered solid, safe, and perhaps somewhat drawish. Black often chooses the Queen's Indian when White avoids the Nimzo-Indian by playing 3.Nf3 instead of 3.Nc3. Black constructs a sound position that makes no positional concessions, although sometimes it is difficult for Black to obtain good winning chances. Karpov is a leading expert in this opening.

The **Modern Benoni** is a risky attempt by Black to unbalance the position and gain active piece play at the cost of allowing White a pawn wedge at d5 and a central majority. Tal popularized the defense in the 1960s by winning several brilliant games with it, and Fischer occasionally adopted it, with good results, including a win in his 1972 world championship match against Boris Spassky. Often Black adopts a slightly different move order, playing 2...e6 before 3...c5 in order to avoid the sharpest lines for White.

The **Benko Gambit** is often played by strong players, and is very popular at lower levels. Black plays to open lines on the queenside where White will be subject to considerable pressure. If White accepts the gambit, Black's compensation is positional rather than tactical, and his initiative can last even after many piece exchanges and well into the **endgame**. White often chooses instead either to decline the gambit pawn or return it.

The **Catalan Opening** is characterized by White forming a pawn center at d4 and c4 and fianchettoing his king's bishop. It resembles a combination of the **Queen's Gambit** and **Réti Opening**. Since the Catalan can be reached from many different move orders, (one **Queen's Gambit Declined**-like move sequence is 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.g3), it is sometimes called the Catalan System.

The most important Indian Defenses are listed below, but many others have been studied and played; see **Indian Defense** for details.

- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 2.d5 e6 **Modern Benoni**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 **Benko Gambit** (or Volga Gambit)
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 **Nimzo-Indian Defence**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 **Queen's Indian Defense**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 **Catalan Opening**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 **Grünfeld Defense**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 **King's Indian Defense (KID)**

### Other Black responses to 1.d4

**Dutch Defense**  
**Benoni Defense**

Main article: **Semi-Closed Game**

Of the defenses to 1.d4 other than 1...d5 and 1...Nf6, the most important are the **Dutch Defense** and the **Benoni Defense**. The Dutch, an aggressive defense adopted for a time by World Champions Alekhine and Botvinnik, and played by both Botvinnik and challenger David Bronstein in their 1951 world championship match, is still played occasionally at the top level by Short and others. Another fairly common opening is the **Benoni Defense**, which may become very wild if it develops into the **Modern Benoni**, though other variations are more solid.

Several other uncommon semi-closed openings have been named and studied, see **Semi-Closed Game** for details.

- 1.d4 c5 Benoni Defense
- 1.d4 f5 Dutch Defense

### Flank openings (including English, Réti, Bird's, and White fianchettoes)

Réti Opening

King's Indian Attack

English Opening

Bird's Opening

Main article: Flank opening

The flank openings are the group of White openings typified by play on one or both flanks. White plays in *hypermodern* style, attacking the center from the flanks with pieces rather than occupying it with pawns. These openings are played often, and 1.Nf3 and 1.c4 trail only 1.e4 and 1.d4 in popularity as opening moves.

If White opens with 1.Nf3, the game often becomes one of the d4 openings (closed games or semi-closed games) by a different move order (this is called *transposition*), but unique openings such as the Réti and King's Indian Attack are also common. The Réti itself is characterized by White playing 1.Nf3, fianchettoing one or both bishops, and not playing an early d4 (which would generally transpose into one of the 1.d4 openings).

The King's Indian Attack (KIA) is a system of development that White may use in reply to almost any Black opening moves. The characteristic KIA setup is 1.Nf3, 2.g3, 3.Bg2, 4.0-0, 5.d3, 6.Nbd2, and 7.e4, although these moves may be played in many different orders. In fact, the KIA is probably most often reached after 1.e4 when White uses it to respond to a Black attempt to play one of the semi-open games such as the Caro-Kann, French, or Sicilian, or even the open games which usually come after 1.e4 e5. Its greatest appeal may be that by adopting a set pattern of development, White can avoid the large amount of opening study required to prepare to meet the many different possible Black replies to 1.e4.<sup>[14]</sup>

The English Opening (1.c4) also frequently transposes into a d4 opening, but it can take on independent character as well including the Symmetrical Variation (1.c4 c5) and the Reversed Sicilian (1.c4 e5).

Larsen's Opening (1.b3) and the Sokolsky Opening (1.b4) are occasionally seen in grandmaster play. Benko used 1.g3 to defeat both Fischer and Tal in the 1962 Candidates Tournament in Curaçao.

With Bird's Opening (1.f4) White tries to get a strong grip on the e5-square. The opening can resemble a Dutch Defense in reverse after 1.f4 d5, or Black may try to disrupt

White by playing 1...e5!? (From's Gambit).

- 1.b3 Larsen's Opening
- 1.b4 Sokolsky Opening
- 1.c4 English Opening
- 1.Nf3 Zukertort Opening (characteristically followed by fianchettoing one or both bishops, and without an early d4)
- 1.Nf3, 2.g3, 3.Bg2, 4.0-0, 5.d3, 6.Nbd2, 7.e4 King's Indian Attack (KIA) (moves may be played in many different orders)
- 1.f4 Bird's Opening
- 1.g3 Benko Opening

### Unusual first moves for White

Main article: Irregular chess opening

First moves other than the king pawn (1.e4), queen pawn (1.d4), or flank openings (1.b3, 1.b4, 1.c4, 1.Nf3, 1.f4, or 1.g3) are not regarded as effective ways to exploit White's first-move advantage and thus are rarely played. Although some of these openings are not actually bad for White, each of the twelve remaining possible first moves suffers one or more of the following defects compared to the more popular choices:

- too passive for White (1.d3, 1.e3, 1.c3, or 1.Nc3)
- gratuitously weakens White's position (1.f3 or 1.g4)
- does little to aid White's development or control the center (1.a3, 1.a4, 1.h3, or 1.h4)
- develops a knight to an inferior square (1.Na3 or 1.Nh3)

### 1.1.5 See also

- *Outline of chess: Chess openings*
- Chess opening book
- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people
- List of chess openings named after places
- List of chess gambits

- *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*
- Chess opening theory table
- Middlegame
- Endgame
- Checkmates in the opening

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- [11] Chess Opening Essentials 4, p. 11, ISBN 978-90-5691-308-3
- [12] Chess Openings for White Explained, p. 27, ISBN 1-889323-11-X
- [13] Chess Opening Essentials 3, p. 38, ISBN 978-90-5691-308-3
- [14] Larry Evans wrote of the King's Indian Attack, "White's resilient setup is truly magical. It throws both players on their own resources and eliminates the need of memorizing long-winded columns of analysis." Larry Evans, *The Chess Opening for You*, R.H.M. Press, 1975, p. 38. ISBN 0-89058-020-0.

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- De Firmian, Nick (1999). *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-14*. Random House Puzzles & Games. ISBN 0-8129-3084-3.

Nick de Firmian is a three-time U.S. Chess Champion. Often called "MCO-14" or simply "MCO", this is the 14th edition of the work that has been the standard English language reference on chess openings for a century. This book is not suitable for beginners, but it is a valuable reference for club and tournament players.

- Stefan Djuric, Dimitri Komarov, & Claudio Pantaleoni, *Chess Opening Essentials* (4 volumes)
- Kasparov, Garry, and Raymond Keene (1994) [1989]. *Batsford Chess Openings 2*. Henry Holt. ISBN 0-8050-3409-9.

Garry Kasparov is the former World Chess Champion from 1985 to 2000 and Raymond Keene is a former British chess champion. This book is often called "BCO 2" and is intended as a reference for club and tournament players.

- Nunn, John (ed.); et al. (1999). *Nunn's Chess Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-221-0.

John Nunn is a former British Chess Champion and a noted chess author. This book is often called "NCO" and is a reference for club and tournament players.

- Summerscale, Aaron (1999). *A Killer Chess Opening Repertoire*. Globe Pequot. ISBN 978-1-85744-519-0.
- Lane, Gary (1999). *Victory in the Opening*. Sterling Pub Co Inc. ISBN 978-0-7134-8427-4.
- Sahovski Informator. *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*

This is an advanced, technical work in five volumes published by Chess Informant of Belgrade. <http://www.sahovski.com/> It analyzes openings used in tournament play and archived in *Chess Informant* since 1966. Instead of using the traditional names for the openings and descriptive text to evaluate positions, Informator has developed a unique coding system that is language independent so that it can be read by chess players

around the world without requiring translation. Called the “ECO”, these volumes are the most comprehensive reference for professional and serious tournament players.

- Scheerer, Christoph (2008). *The Greatest Ever Chess Opening Ideas*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-561-9.
- Seirawan, Yasser (2003). “Winning Chess Openings”. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-349-7. An elementary/introductory book.
- van der Sterren, Paul, *Fundamental Chess Openings, Gambit*, 2009, ISBN 978-1-906454-13-5
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- Watson, John (2006). “Mastering the Chess Openings, vol 1”. Gambit. ISBN 978-1-904600-60-2.

Three chapters of general opening principles; open and semi-open games.

- Watson, John (2007). “Mastering the Chess Openings, vol 2”. Gambit. ISBN 978-1-904600-69-5.:Closed games and Indian defenses.
- Watson, John (2008). “Mastering the Chess Openings, vol 3”. Gambit. ISBN 978-1-904600-98-5.

#### English Opening

- Watson, John (2010). “Mastering the Chess Openings, vol 4”. Gambit. ISBN 978-1-906454-19-7.

### 1.1.7 External links

- Chess Opening Videos and Analysis
- Wikichess, open chess repertoire project
- Chess openings guide
- An online chess openings tree application
- Chess Opening Explorer on Chessgames.com
- Searchable Database of Chess Openings
- Unorthodox Chess Opening’s Yahoo! group
- A Collection of Chess Wisdom - The Opening Chessville.com
- Chess Siberia
- Chess Openings
- A Method for Comparing Chess Openings

# Chapter 2

## e4 Openings

### 2.1 King's Pawn Game

The **King's Pawn Game** is any chess opening starting with the move:

1. e4

It is among the most popular opening moves in chess.<sup>[1]</sup>

#### 2.1.1 Details about the move and the game plan

White opens with the most popular of the twenty possible opening moves. Although effective in winning for White (54.25%), it is not quite as successful as the four next most common openings for White: 1.d4 (55.95%), 1.Nf3 (55.8%), 1.c4 (56.3%), and 1.g3 (55.8%).<sup>[2]</sup> Since nearly all openings beginning 1.e4 have names of their own, the term “King's Pawn Game”, unlike **Queen's Pawn Game**, is rarely used to describe the opening of the game.

Advancing the king's pawn two squares is highly useful because it occupies a center square, attacks the center square d5, and allows the development of White's king's bishop and queen. Chess legend **Bobby Fischer** said that the King's Pawn Game is “Best by test.”

King's Pawn Games are further classified by whether Black responds with 1...e5 or not. Openings beginning with 1.e4 e5 are called Double King's Pawn Games (or Openings), Symmetrical King's Pawn Games (or Openings), or **Open Games** – these terms are equivalent. Openings where Black responds to 1.e4 with a move other than 1...e5 are called Asymmetrical King's Pawn Games or **Semi-Open Games**.

The *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) classifies all King's Pawn Games into volumes B or C: volume C if the game starts with 1.e4 e6 (the **French Defence**) or 1.e4 e5; volume B if Black answers 1.e4 with any other move. The rare instances where the opening does not fall into a more specific category than “King's Pawn Game” are included in

codes B00 (includes the **Nimzowitsch Defence** and unusual moves after 1.e4), C20 (includes **Alapin's Opening** and unusual moves after 1.e4 e5), C40 (includes the **Latvian Gambit** and unusual moves after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3), and C50 (includes the **Hungarian Defence**, the **Giucoco Pianissimo**, and unusual moves after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4).

#### 2.1.2 Popular continuations

The Black responses which are given one or more chapters in the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) are given below, ranked in order of popularity according to **ChessBase**.

- **1... c5**, the **Sicilian Defence**, is in modern practice the most common continuation. The Sicilian Defence allows Black to fight for the center by preparing to meet a d2–d4 advance with ...c5xd4. The Sicilian is among the sharpest and most analyzed openings in chess, and it has eighty chapters, B20–B99, set aside for it in ECO.
- **1... e5** leads to the classical **Open Games**, which includes openings like the **Ruy Lopez**, **King's Gambit**, **Italian Game**, **Scotch Game** and **Petroff Defence**. Also in this opening, Black is ready to meet a d2–d4 advance with e5xd4. These openings are covered in chapters C20–C99 in ECO.
- **1... e6** is the **French Defence**, covered in chapters C00–C19 in ECO. Black's restrained response allows White to play 2.d4. This gives White a spatial advantage, with two pawns in the center to Black's one (after the usual 2... d5). One or the other player will usually resolve the center tension, either by Black playing ...dxe4 or White advancing with e5. In the latter case, Black typically works to undermine White's pawn center with ...c5 and/or ...f6.
- **1... c6** is the **Caro-Kann Defence**, covered in chapters B10–B19 in ECO. Like the French, this is also considered to be a solid reply, but Black will often need

to surrender control over the center (e.g., after 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Black usually plays 3...dxe4). On the other hand, the light-squared bishop will usually not wind up trapped behind its own pawns, as is common in the French.

- **1... d6** is usually played with the intention of playing the **Pirc Defence** (1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6, ECO code B07-B09), a hypermodern defence in which Black allows White to construct a dominant center, with the intention of subverting it later. It can also lead to the **Modern Defence**, **Pribyl System** or **Philidor Defence**.
- **1... g6** is the **Modern Defence**. This can lead to a related opening called the **Pirc Defence** (1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6). These openings allow White to build up a pawn center with 2.d4, but Black will develop the king's bishop to g7 and strike back at the center. These openings are covered in chapters B06–B09 in ECO.
- **1... Nf6** is the **Alekhine Defence**, which invites White to attack the knight with 2.e5. Black is often forced to spend time moving the knight several times as it is chased around the board, all the while allowing White to build up a broad pawn center. Black counts on the pawns becoming overextended so that he can later undermine them. The Alekhine is covered in chapters B02–B05 of ECO.
- **1... d5**, the **Scandinavian Defence** or **Center Counter Defence**, is a direct strike at the pawn at e4, forcing the situation in the center. After 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3, however, White gains time by attacking Black's prematurely developed queen. Alternatively, Black can play 2...Nf6 (the **Marshall Gambit**), when White chooses between 3.d4 Nxd5 4.c4 with a spatial advantage, or 3.c4, when Black usually offers a **gambit** with either 3...c6 or 3...e6. The Scandinavian is covered in chapter B01 in ECO.

### 2.1.3 Uncommon continuations

Apart from these eight responses, all other replies from Black are covered together in ECO chapter B00 ("Uncommon King's Pawn Opening"). A few of these are not entirely obscure, and have received extensive analysis.

- **1... Nc6** is the **Nimzowitsch Defence**. After 2.d4, there are two distinctive main lines: 2...e5, favored by British grandmaster Tony Miles, and 2...d5, introduced and often played by the influential Latvian-Danish player and writer Aron Nimzowitsch (1886–1935).

- **1... b6** is **Owen's Defence**, preparing to develop Black's bishop to b7 to put pressure on White's center.
- **1... a6** is the **St. George Defence**. Black prepares to advance on the queenside with 2...b5, but allows White to occupy the center with 2.d4. The opening gained some attention after Miles used it to defeat Anatoly Karpov in 1980.<sup>[3]</sup>
- **1... g5** is the **Borg Defence** ("Grob" backwards) or **Basman Defence**, often played by IM Michael Basman. The move weakens the kingside severely, but according to *Modern Chess Openings* (MCO), Black is only somewhat worse.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 2.1.4 Rare continuations

The remaining replies to 1.e4 are very rare, and have not received significant and serious attention by masters. MCO does not cover them, considering them so bad as not to merit discussion.<sup>[5]</sup> These openings sometimes lead to wild and exciting games, and are occasionally employed by weaker players to get better trained opponents "out-of-book". Some have exotic names, they are listed below along with instances where they have been used by strong players.

Fred Defence after 2.exf5 Nf6

- **1... a5**, the **Corn Stalk Defence**. United States chess player Preston Ware played the Corn Stalk in eleven recorded tournament games from 1880 to 1882, winning four and losing seven.
- **1... Na6**, called the **Lemming Defence** in *Unorthodox Chess Openings*, develops the knight to an inferior square. The line has been suggested against some older computers, hoping for 2.Bxa6 bxa6, when Black has the bishop pair and a quick **fianchetto** as compensation for the doubled pawns. However, Black has no justification for playing 1...Na6 if White avoids this line.
- **1... f5** is called the **Duras Gambit** in *Unorthodox Chess Openings*, and is also known as the **Fred Defence**. This is a pawn sacrifice which gives Black a lead in development after 2.exf5 Nf6, but without much compensation for the sacrificed pawn. The line was played three times in an exhibition match between Ossip Bernstein and Oldřich Duras.
- **1... f6** is known as the **Barnes Defence** after Thomas Wilson Barnes. This move is clearly inferior, taking away the f6-square from the knight and weakening

Black's kingside, although Barnes managed to defeat **Paul Morphy** with this defence in 1858.<sup>[6][7]</sup>

- **1... h5**, the Goldsmith Defence or Pickering Defence. All this move does is waste a tempo weakening the kingside.<sup>[8]</sup>
- **1... h6**, called the Carr Defence in *Unorthodox Chess Openings*. This defence has also been used by Michael Basman, and is likely to transpose to the Borg Defence (after 2.d4 g5).
- **1... Nh6**, the Adams Defence or Wild Bull Defence.<sup>[8]</sup>
- **1... b5** simply loses a pawn to 2.Bxb5.

### 2.1.5 See also

- Open Game
- Semi-Open Game
- List of chess openings

### 2.1.6 Notes

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- [4] Nick de Firmian, *Modern Chess Openings*, 15th edition, Random House, 2008, p. 384. ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7.
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## 2.2 Open Game

An **Open Game** (or **Double King's Pawn Opening**) is a **chess opening** which begins with the following moves:

1. e4 e5

White has moved the king's pawn forward two squares and Black replies in kind, the result being an Open Game. Other responses to 1.e4 are termed **Semi-Open Games**, or Single King's Pawn Games.

The term Open Game can also refer to any chess position where ranks, files and diagonals are open, and usually favor tactical gameplay. Bishops are generally stronger than knights on an open board due to their ability to cover longer distances.

### 2.2.1 Analysis

White opens by playing 1.e4, which is the most popular opening move and has many strengths—it immediately stakes a claim in the center, and frees two pieces (the queen and king's bishop) for action. The oldest openings in chess follow 1.e4. Bobby Fischer wrote that 1.e4 was “best by test”. On the negative side, 1.e4 places a pawn on an undefended square and weakens the squares d4 and f4; the Hungarian master Gyula Breyer melodramatically declared that “After 1.e4, White's game is in its last throes.” If Black keeps the symmetry by replying 1...e5, the result is an Open Game (Hooper & Whyld 1992) (Watson 2006:87–90).

### 2.2.2 Defenses

The most popular second move for White is 2.Nf3, attacking Black's king pawn, preparing to castle kingside, and preparing for d2–d4. Black's most common reply is 2...Nc6, which usually leads to the Ruy Lopez (3.Bb5), Italian Game (3.Bc4), or Scotch Game (3.d4), though 3.Nc3 Nf6 (the Four Knights Game), often played in the late 19th to early 20th century, or, less commonly, 3....g6, (the Three Knights Game), are other possibilities. If Black instead maintains symmetry and counterattacks White's center with 2...Nf6 then the Petrov's Defense will usually result, though White can avoid the extensive theory of the Petrov by playing 3.Nc3 if he wishes.

The Philidor Defence, (2...d6), largely fell out of use after World War I, as Black players sought positions offering more counterchances than the solid, though passive game which generally arises from this opening.

The Damiano Defense (2...f6) may be met by either 3.Nxe5 or 3.Bc4, with advantage; the Elephant Gambit (2...d5) and

the **Latvian Gambit** (2...f5) are considered very risky for Black, with the latter usually seen only in correspondence play.

The most popular alternatives to 2.Nf3 are 2.f4 (the **King's Gambit**), 2.Nc3 (the **Vienna Game**), and 2.Bc4 (the **Bishop's Opening**). These three openings have some similarities; some of the quieter lines in the Vienna and Bishop's Opening can **transpose** to positional variations of the King's Gambit Declined, when White plays f2–f4 before playing Nf3. The King's Gambit was popular in the nineteenth century with grandmaster and amateur alike. White offers a pawn for speedy development, as well as to attack Black's central outpost. The Vienna Game also frequently features attacks on the Black center by means of f2–f4.

Philidor Defense after 2...d6

In the **Center Game** (2.d4), White immediately opens the center, though if the pawn is to be recovered after 2...exd4, White must prematurely develop his queen. An alternative is to **sacrifice** one or two pawns by offering the **Danish Gambit** (3.c3). The early development of the queen in the **Wayward Queen Attack** (2.Qh5) or the **Napoleon Opening** (2.Qf3) looks amateurish, though the Wayward Queen Attack has been played in a grandmaster tournament by no less a player than Hikaru Nakamura.

The **Portuguese Opening** (2.Bb5), **Alapin's Opening** (2.Ne2), **Konstantinopolsky Opening** (2.Nf3 Nc6 3.g3), and **Inverted Hungarian Opening** (2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Be2) are offbeat tries for White, though none promise any advantage in the face of correct play.

### 2.2.3 Examples of Open Games

- 1.e4 e5 2.Bb5 **Portuguese Opening**
- 1.e4 e5 2.c3 **Lopez Opening**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 **Vienna Game**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 **Bishop's Opening**
- 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 **Danish Gambit**
- 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.Qxd4 **Center Game**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Ne2 **Alapin's Opening**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 **Ruy Lopez**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3 **Ponziani Opening**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 without 3...Nf6 **Three Knights Game**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 **Four Knights Game**

- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 **Italian Game**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 **Giuoco Piano**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4 **Evans Gambit**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Be7 **Hungarian Defense**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 **Two Knights Defense**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 **Scotch Game**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Be2 **Inverted Hungarian Opening**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.g3 **Konstantinopolsky Opening**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d5!? **Elephant Gambit**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 **Philidor Defence**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 **Latvian Gambit**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f6 **Damiano Defense**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 **Petrov's Defence**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Qf6 **Greco Defense**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Qf3?! **Napoleon Opening**
- 1.e4 e5 2.f4 **King's Gambit**
- 1.e4 e5 2.Qh5!? **Parham Attack**

### 2.2.4 See also

- Chess opening
- List of chess openings
- Encyclopedia of Chess Openings
- King's Pawn Game
- Semi-Open Game (1.e4 other)
- Closed Game (1.d4 d5)
- Semi-Closed Game (1.d4 other)
- Flank opening (1.c4, 1.Nf3, 1.f4, and others)
- Irregular chess opening

### 2.2.5 References

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992), *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.), Oxford University Press, ISBN 0-19-866164-9
- Watson, John (2006), *Mastering the Chess Openings, vol 1*, Gambit, ISBN 978-1-904600-60-2

## 2.2.6 Further reading

- Djuric, Stefan; Komarov, Dimitri; Pantaleoni, Claudio (2008), *Chess Opening Essentials, vol 1: the complete 1.e4*, New in Chess, ISBN 978-90-5691-203-1
- Flear, Glenn (2010), *Starting Out: Open Games*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 978-1-85744-630-2

## 2.3 Semi-Open Game

A **Semi-Open Game** is a **chess opening** in which White plays 1.e4 and Black breaks symmetry immediately by replying with a move other than 1...e5. The Semi-Open Games are also called **Single King Pawn**, **Asymmetrical King Pawn**, or **Half-Open Games** (or Openings), and are the complement of the **Open Games** or Double King Pawn Games which begin 1.e4 e5.

### 2.3.1 Popular defenses

The most popular Black defense to 1.e4 is the **Sicilian**, but the **French** and the **Caro-Kann** are also very popular. The **Pirc** and the **Modern** are also commonly seen, while the **Alekhine** and the **Scandinavian** have made occasional appearances in World Chess Championship games. The **Nimzowitsch** is playable but rare, as is **Owen's Defense**. The **Borg Defense** and the **St. George Defense** are oddities, although **Tony Miles** once used **St. George's Defense** to defeat then World Champion **Anatoly Karpov**.

The **Sicilian** and **French Defenses** lead to unbalanced positions that can offer exciting play with both sides having chances to win. The **Caro-Kann Defense** is solid as Black intends to use his c-pawn to support his center (1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5). **Alekhine's**, the **Pirc** and the **Modern** are **hypermodern** openings in which Black tempts White to build a large center with the goal of attacking it with pieces.

Sicilian Defense  
 French Defense  
 Caro-Kann Defence  
 Nimzowitsch Defence  
 Alekhine's Defence  
 Pirc Defense  
 Modern Defense  
 Scandinavian Defense  
 Owen's Defense (Greek Defense)

### 2.3.2 List

- 1.e4 a5 Corn Stalk Defence

- 1.e4 a6 St. George Defence
- 1.e4 Na6 Lemming Defense
- 1.e4 b6 Owen's Defence
- 1.e4 c5 Sicilian Defence
- 1.e4 c6 Caro-Kann Defence
- 1.e4 Nc6 Nimzowitsch Defence
- 1.e4 d5 Scandinavian Defence
- 1.e4 d6 2.d4 f5 Balogh Defence
- 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 c6 Czech Defence
- 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 Pirc Defence
- 1.e4 e6 French Defence
- 1.e4 f5 Fred Defence
- 1.e4 f6 Barnes Defence
- 1.e4 Nf6 Alekhine's Defence
- 1.e4 g5 Borg Opening
- 1.e4 g6 Modern Defence
- 1.e4 h5 Goldsmith Defence
- 1.e4 h6 Carr Defense
- 1.e4 Nh6 Adams Defence

### 2.3.3 See also

- **Open Game** (1.e4 e5)
- **Closed Game** (1.d4 d5)
- **Semi-Closed Game** (1.d4 other)
- **Flank opening** (1.c4, 1.Nf3, 1.f4, and others)
- **Irregular chess opening**

### 2.3.4 References

- De Firmian, Nick (1999), *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-14*, Random House Puzzles & Games, ISBN 0-8129-3084-3
- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992), *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (second ed.), Oxford University Press, ISBN 0-19-280049-3

## Chapter 3

# e4 Openings – King’s Knight Openings

### 3.1 King’s Knight Opening

The **King’s Knight Opening** is a chess opening consisting of the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3

The opening is likely to continue into one of a number of other named openings, depending mainly on Black’s second move.

#### 3.1.1 Main line: 2...Nc6

Most games (more than 80%) continue with 2...Nc6.

Some moves from here include:

- 3. Bb5: Ruy Lopez
  - 3...a6: Ruy Lopez, Morphy Defence (main line)
  - 3...Nf6: Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defence
  - 3...d6: Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Defence
  - 3...f5: Ruy Lopez, Schliemann Defence
  - 3...Bc5: Ruy Lopez, Classical Defence
- 3. Bc4: Italian Game
  - 3...Bc5: Giuoco Piano
  - 3...Nf6: Two Knights Defence
- 3. d4: Scotch Game
- 3. Nc3: Three Knights Game
  - 3...Nf6: Four Knights Game
  - 3...g6: Three Knights Game (main)
- 3. c3: Ponziani Opening

#### 3.1.2 Other Black defenses

- 2...Nf6: Petrov’s Defense (C42)
- 2...d6: Philidor’s Defense (C41)

#### Less common defenses

A number of less popular continuations are possible. These openings are generally considered to be less sound than those mentioned above.

- 2...Qe7 (the Gunderam Defense)
- 2...Qf6 (the Greco Defence)
- 2...f6 (the Damiano Defence)
- 2...d5 (the Elephant Gambit)
- 2...f5 (the Latvian Gambit)

These openings are all categorized in the **ECO** under code C40.

#### 3.1.3 References

- *Batsford Chess Openings 2* (1989, 1994). Garry Kasparov, Raymond Keene. ISBN 0-8050-3409-9.

#### 3.1.4 External links

- Analysis at Chessgames.com

### 3.2 Ruy Lopez

For other uses, see Ruy Lopez (disambiguation).

The **Ruy Lopez** (/rʊ.ɪ ˈloʊpez/; Spanish pronunciation: [ˈruj ˈlopeθ/ˈlopes]), also called the **Spanish Opening** or **Spanish Game**, is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bb5

The Ruy Lopez is named after 16th-century Spanish priest **Ruy López de Segura**. It is one of the most popular openings, with such a vast number of variations that in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) all codes from C60 to C99 are assigned to them.

### 3.2.1 History

The opening is named after the 16th-century Spanish priest **Ruy López de Segura**, who made a systematic study of this and other openings in the 150-page book on chess *Libro del Ajedrez* written in 1561. Although it bears his name, this particular opening was included in the **Göttingen manuscript**, which dates from c. 1490. Popular use of the Ruy Lopez opening did not develop, however, until the mid-19th century when **Carl Jaenisch**, a Russian theoretician, “rediscovered” its potential. The opening remains the most commonly used amongst the **open games** in master play; it has been adopted by almost all players during their careers, many of whom have played it with both colours. Due to the difficulty for Black to achieve equality,<sup>[1]</sup> and the fact that Lopez was at the same time as the **Inquisition**, a common nickname for the opening is “The Spanish Torture”.

In a *Chess Notes* feature article, Edward Winter provided a collection of historical analytical articles (1840s–1930s) focused on the Berlin Defence.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 3.2.2 Basics

At the most basic level, White’s third move attacks the knight which defends the e5-pawn from the attack by the f3 knight. White’s apparent threat to win Black’s e-pawn with 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.Nxe5 is illusory—Black can respond with 5...Qd4, **forking** the knight and e4-pawn, which will win back the **material** with a good position. White’s 3.Bb5 is still a good move; it develops a piece, prepares **castling**, and sets up a potential **pin** against Black’s king. However, since White’s third move carries no immediate threat, Black can respond in a wide variety of ways.

Traditionally, White’s objective in playing the Ruy Lopez is to spoil Black’s **pawn structure**; either way Black recaptures following the exchange on c6 will have negative features for him, though he thereby gains the **bishop pair**.<sup>[3]</sup>

White does not always exchange bishop for knight on c6, however, but usually in the various forms of the Exchange Variation (ECO C68–C69).

The theory of the Ruy Lopez is the most extensively developed of all open games, with some lines having been analysed well beyond move thirty. At nearly every move there are many reasonable alternatives, and most have been deeply explored. It is convenient to divide the possibilities into two groups based on whether or not Black responds with (3...a6), which is named the **Morphy Defence** after **Paul Morphy**, although he was not the originator of the line.<sup>[4]</sup> The variations with Black moves other than 3...a6 are older and generally simpler, but the Morphy Defence lines are more commonly played.

### 3.2.3 Morphy Defence: 3...a6

Morphy Defence 3...a6

By far the most commonly played Black third move is the **Morphy Defence**, 3...a6, which “puts the question” to the white bishop. The main point to 3...a6 is that after the common retreat 4.Ba4, Black will have the possibility of breaking the eventual pin on his queen’s knight by playing ...b5. White must take some care not to fall into the **Noah’s Ark Trap**, in which Black traps White’s king bishop on the b3-square with a ...a6, ...b5, and ...c4 pawn advance on the **queenside**. **Ercole del Rio**, in his 1750 *treatise Sopra il giuoco degli Scacchi, Osservazioni pratiche dell’anonimo Modenese* (On the game of Chess, practical Observations by an anonymous Modenese), was the first author to mention 3...a6.<sup>[5]</sup> However, the move became popular after it was played by **Paul Morphy**, and it is named for him. Steinitz did not approve of the move; in 1889, he wrote, “on principle this ought to be disadvantageous as it drives the bishop where it wants to go”. Steinitz’ opinion did not prevail, however; today, 3...a6 is played in over 75 percent of all games beginning with the Ruy Lopez.

#### Morphy Defence: alternatives to Closed Defence

After 3...a6, the most commonly played line is the Closed Defence, which goes 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7, discussed in the two following sections. Alternatives to the Closed Defence described in this section are:

- 4.Bxc6 (Exchange Variation)
- 4.Ba4
  - 4...b5 5.Bb3 Na5 (Norwegian Variation)
  - 4...b5 5.Bb3 Bc5 (Graz Defence)

- 4...b5 5.Bb3 Bb7 (Caro Variation)
- 4...Bc5 (Classical Defence Deferred)
- 4...d6 (Steinitz Defence Deferred)
- 4...f5 (Schliemann Defence Deferred)
- 4...Nge7 (Cozio Defence Deferred)
- 4...Be7 5.Qe2 Nf6 (Wormald Attack)
- 4...Be7 5.0-0 Nf6 (Closed Defence)
- 4...Nf6 5.0-0 b5 6.Bb3 Bb7 (Arkhangelsk Defence)
- 4...Nf6 5.0-0 b5 6.Bb3 Bc5 (Modern Archangel Defence)
- 4...Nf6 5.0-0 Bc5 (Møller Defence)
- 4...Nf6 5.0-0 d6 (Russian Defence)
- 4...Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4 (Open Defence)
- 4...Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 (Closed Defence)
- 4...Nf6 5.d4 (Mackenzie Variation)
- 4...Nf6 5.Qe2 (Wormald Attack)
- 4...Nf6 5.d3 (Anderssen Variation)

**Exchange Variation: 4.Bxc6** Exchange Variation after 4...dxc6

Main article: [Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation](#)

In the **Exchange Variation**, 4.Bxc6, (ECO C68–C69) White damages Black's pawn structure, giving him a ready-made long-term plan of playing d4 ...exd4 Qxd4, followed by exchanging all the pieces and winning the pure pawn ending. Black gains good compensation, however, in the form of the bishop pair, and the variation is not considered White's most ambitious, though former world champions [Emanuel Lasker](#) and [Bobby Fischer](#) employed it with success.

After 4.Bxc6, Black almost always responds 4...dxc6, although 4...bxc6 is playable. It is not usually played due to the reply 5.d4 exd4 6.Qxd4 and White is in control of the centre. After 4...dxc6, the obvious 5.Nxe5? is weak, since 5...Qd4! 6.Nf3 Qxe4+ 7.Qe2 Qxe2+ leaves White with no compensation for Black's bishop pair. There are two principal lines after 4.Bxc6 dxc6. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Lasker had great success with 5.d4 exd4 6.Qxd4 Qxd4 7.Nxd4. Since then, better defences for Black have been developed, and this line is considered to slightly favour Black. Jon Jacobs wrote in the July 2005 *Chess Life* (p. 21): "A database search (limited to games longer than 20 moves, both players FIDE 2300+) reveals the position after 7.Nxd4 was reached 20 times from 1985–2002. White's results were abysmal: +0–7=13." Max Euwe gives the pure pawn ending in this position as a win for White.<sup>[6]</sup>

The flexible 5.0-0 is sometimes called the **Barendregt Variation**, but it was Fischer who developed it into a serious weapon in the 1960s. Unlike 5.d4, it forces Black to defend his e-pawn, which he usually does with 5...f6, 5...Bg4, 5...Qd6 (the sharpest line, preparing queenside castling), 5...Qe7, 5...Qf6 or 5...Bd6. A rare but playable move is 5...Be6 (or 5...Be7), the idea being that if White plays 6.Nxe5, Black plays 6... Qd4, forking the knight and the e4-pawn. The move ...Qd4, regaining the pawn at e4, is usually impossible in these variations once White has castled, due to the open e-file.

White may also delay the exchange for a move or two: 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.Bxc6 or 5.0-0 Be7 6.Bxc6 (the **Delayed Exchange Deferred**), for example; at first glance this seems a waste of time, but Black having played ...Nf6 rules out defending the pawn with ...f6, and the bishop already being on e7 means that ...Bd6 would be a loss of tempo.

**Norwegian Defence: 4.Ba4 b5 5.Bb3 Na5** The **Norwegian Variation** (also called the **Taimanov or Wing Variation**) (ECO C70), 3...a6 4.Ba4 b5 5.Bb3 Na5 aims to eliminate the white bishop but is generally considered too time-consuming for Black. The usual continuation is 6.0-0 d6 7.d4 Nxb3, but the speculative sacrifice 6.Bxf7+?! Kxf7 7.Nxe5+, which drives the black king out, has been played. However, with accurate play, Black is supposed to be able to consolidate his extra piece.

This defence has been known since the 1880s and was reintroduced in 1901 by [Carl Schlechter](#). In the 1950s, [Mark Taimanov](#) played it with some success, though it remained a sideline, as it has to this day. The Norwegian connection was first introduced by Svein Johannessen who played the line from 1957 and later strengthened when [Simen Agdestein](#) and some other Norwegian players adopted the variation. In 1995 [Jonathan Tisdall](#) published the article "Ruy Lopez. The Norwegian Variation" in *New in Chess Yearbook* 37.

**Variations combining 3...a6 and ...Bc5** Møller Defence 5...Bc5

The **Graz Defence**, **Classical Defence Deferred**, and **Møller Defence** combine 3...a6 with the active move ...Bc5. For a century it was believed that it was safer for Black to place the bishop on e7, but it is much more active on c5. White can gain time after playing d4 as the black bishop will have to move, but this does not always seem to be as important as was once thought.<sup>[7]</sup>

The Møller Defence, 3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Bc5 was already an old line in 1903 when [Dane Jørgen Møller](#) (1873–1944) analysed it in *Tidsskrift för Schack*. [Alexander](#)

**Alekhine** played this for Black in the early portion of his career; despite his advocacy, it never achieved great popularity, and even he eventually came to consider it dubious.

The **Graz Defence**, 3...a6 4.Ba4 b5 5.Bb3 Bc5, was analysed by Alois Fink (b. 1910) in *Österreichische Schachzeitung* in 1956 and in *Wiener Schach Nachrichten* in 1979, although it did not become popular until the 1990s.

**Steinitz Defence Deferred: 4.Ba4 d6** Steinitz Defence Deferred 4...d6

In the **Steinitz Defence Deferred** (also called the **Modern Steinitz Defence** or the **Neo-Steinitz Defence**) (ECO C71–C76), Black interpolates 3...a6 4.Ba4 before playing 4...d6, which was frequently played by **Alexander Alekhine**, **José Raúl Capablanca** and **Paul Keres**. The possibility of breaking the pin with a timely ...b5 gives Black more latitude than in the Old Steinitz Defence; in particular, in the Old Steinitz, White can practically force Black to give up his strongpoint at e5, but in the Steinitz Deferred, Black is able to maintain his centre. Most plausible White moves are playable here, including 5.c3, 5.c4, 5.Bxc6, 5.d4, and 5.0-0. The sharp **Siesta Variation** arises after 5.c3 f5, while a manoeuvring game results from the calmer 5.c3 Bd7 6.d4. The game is also sharp after 5.Bxc6+ bxc6 6.d4 (ECO C73) or 5.0-0 Bg4 6.h3 h5 (ECO C72). The older lines starting with 5.c4 and 5.d4 are not regarded as testing for Black, though the latter offers a tricky gambit. There are six **ECO classifications** for the Modern Steinitz. White's responses 5.d4, 5.Nc3, and 5.c4 are included in C71, while 5.0-0 is C72. The delayed exchange 5.Bxc6+ bxc6 6.d4 is C73. C74–C76 all begin with 5.c3. C74 covers 5...Nf6, but primarily focuses on 5...f5 6.exf5 Bxf5 with 7.d4 or 7.0-0. C75's main continuation is 5...Bd7 6.d4 Nge7, the **Rubinstein Variation**. C76 is characterised by the Black kingside fianchetto 5...Bd7 6.d4 g6.

**Schliemann Defence Deferred: 4.Ba4 f5** The **Schliemann Defence Deferred**, 3...a6 4.Ba4 f5, is rarely seen, with practically its only top-level appearance being in the 1974 Candidates Final, when **Viktor Korchnoi** adopted it versus **Anatoly Karpov**. It is considered inferior to the regular Schliemann, since White can answer effectively with 5.d4! exd4 6.e5.

**Arkhangelsk Defence: 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 b5 6.Bb3 Bb7** Arkhangelsk Defence 6...Bb7

The **Arkhangelsk Defence** (or **Archangel Defence**) (ECO C78) was invented by Soviet theoreticians in the city of Arkhangelsk. The variation begins 3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-

0 b5 6.Bb3 Bb7. This line often leads to sharp positions in which Black wagers that the fianchettoed bishop's influence on the centre and kingside will offset Black's delay in castling. White has several options, including attempting to build an ideal pawn centre with c3 and d4, defending the e-pawn with Re1 or simply developing. The Arkhangelsk Defence is tactically justified by Black's ability to meet 7.Ng5 with 7...d5 8.exd5 Nd4! (not 8...Nxd5, when White gets the advantage with 9.Qh5 g6 10.Qf3).

**Mackenzie Variation 4. Ba4 Nf6 5.d4** The **Mackenzie Variation** 5.d4, is a sharp line followed normally by 5...exd4 6.O-O and 6...Be7 instead of 6...Nxe4 because black will surely lose his knight. 7.Re1 follows, then black plays 7...b5. Some players prefer the simple 8.Bb3, while others go for the sharp 8.e5.

**Russian Defence: 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 d6** Russian Defence 5...d6

The **Russian Defence** (ECO C79) can be considered a delayed Steinitz Defence Deferred. With the move order 3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 d6, Black waits until White castles before playing ...d6. This can enable Black to avoid some lines in the Steinitz Defence Deferred in which White castles **queenside** although the position of the knight on f6 also precludes Black from supporting the centre with f7–f6. These nuances seem to have little importance today, as neither the Steinitz Defence Deferred nor the Russian Defence have been popular for many years.

**Chigorin** played the Russian Defence in the 1890s, and later it was adopted by **Rubinstein** and Alekhine. The last significant use of the Russian Defence was in the 1950s when it was played by some Russian masters.

**Open Defence: 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4** Open Defence after 8...Be6

In the **Open Defence**, 3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4, Black tries to make use of the time White will take to regain the pawn to gain a foothold in the centre, with play usually continuing 6.d4 b5 7.Bb3 d5 8.dxe5 Be6. Here 8.Nxe5, once adopted by Fischer, is much less often seen, and Black should equalise after the accurate 8...Nxe5 9.dxe5 c6, which avoids prematurely committing the light-squared bishop and solidly defends d5, often a problem in the Open. The **Riga Variation**, 6...exd4, is considered inferior; the main line runs 7.Re1 d5 8.Nxd4 Bd6! 9.Nxc6 Bxh2+! 10.Kh1! (10.Kxh2 Qh4+ 11.Kg1 Qxf2+ draws by perpetual check.) Qh4 11.Rxe4+! dxe4 12.Qd8+! Qxd8 13.Nxd8+ Kxd8 14.Kxh2 Be6 (14...f5?? 15.Bg5#!)

and now the **endgame** is considered to favour White after 15.Be3 or Nd2 (but not 15.Nc3 c5!, playing to trap the bishop).

White has a variety of options at move nine, including 9.c3, 9.Be3, 9.Qe2 and 9.Nbd2.

The classical line starts with 9.c3 when Black may choose from 9...Na5, 9...Be7 (the main line), and the aggressive 9...Bc5.

After 9.c3 Bc5 10.Nbd2 0-0 11.Bc2, Black must meet the attack on e4, with the following possibilities from which to choose: 11...f5, 11...Bf5, both of which aim to maintain the strongpoint on e4, or the forcing line 11...Nxf2, introduced by the English amateur Vernon Dilworth.

Today, 9.Be3 Be7 10.c3 is often used to transpose into the main line, 9.c3, while obviating the option of the Dilworth.

An old continuation is 11...f5, when after 12.Nb3 Ba7 13.Nfd4 Nxd4 14.Nxd4 Bxd4 White can gain some advantage with **Bogoljubov's** 15.Qxd4. Instead, the very sharp **La Grande Variante** continues 15.cxd4 f4 16.f3 Ng3 17.hxg3 fxg3 18.Qd3 Bf5 19.Qxf5 Rxf5 20.Bxf5 Qh4 21.Bh3 Qxd4+ 22.Kh1 Qxe5, with unclear consequences. Perhaps the most famous game in this variation is **Smyslov–Reshevsky**, 1945 USSR–USA Radio Match. An analysis of the line had just been published in a Russian chess magazine, and Smyslov was able to follow it to quickly obtain a winning position. Reshevsky had not seen the analysis and he struggled in vain to solve the position over the board with his **chess clock** running. The **Dilworth Variation** (or **Attack**), 11...Nxf2 12.Rxf2 f6 13.exf6 Bxf2+ 14.Kxf2 Qxf6 has scored well for Black, with many traps for the ill-prepared White player. The main line leads to unbalanced endgames which are difficult to play for both sides, though with a strong drawing tendency. **Yusupov** is one of the few **grandmasters** to often adopt the Dilworth.

In the **Howell Attack** (ECO C81), 9.Qe2, White aims for play against d5 after Rd1. The game usually continues 9...Be7 10.Rd1 followed by 10...Nc5 or 10...0-0. **Keres** played this line several times in the late 1940s, and it is sometimes named after him.

**Karpov's** move, 9.Nbd2, limits Black's options. In the 1978 Karpov–Korchnoi **World Chess Championship** match, following 9.Nbd2 Nc5 10.c3 d4 (10...Be7 is an old move that remains popular) Karpov introduced the surprising 11.Ng5!?, a move suggested by his trainer, **Igor Zaitsev**. If Black takes the knight with 11...Qxg5 White regains the material with 12.Qf3. This variation played a decisive role in a later World Championship match, **Kasparov–Anand** 1995, when Anand was unable to successfully defend as Black.

## Closed Defence 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7: alternatives to Main line

Closed Defence after 5...Be7

In the main line, White normally retreats his bishop with 4.Ba4, when the usual continuation is 4...Nf6 5.0-0 Be7. Black now threatens to win a pawn with 6...b5 followed by 7...Nxe4, so White must respond. Usually White defends the e-pawn with 6.Re1 which, in turn, threatens Black with the loss of a pawn after 7.Bxc6 and 8.Nxe5. Black most commonly averts this threat by driving away the white bishop with 6...b5 7.Bb3, although it is also possible to defend the pawn with 6...d6.

After 4...Nf6 5.0-0 Be7, the most frequently seen continuation is 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0, discussed in the next section. Examined in this section are the alternatives to the main line:

- 6.Bxc6 (Delayed Exchange Variation Deferred)
- 6.d4 (Centre Attack)
- 6.Qe2 (Worrall Attack)
- 6.Re1 d6 (Averbakh Variation)
- 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3
  - 7...Bb7 (Trajković Variation)
  - 7...0-0 8.c3 d5 (Marshall Attack)

**Delayed Exchange Variation Deferred: 6.Bxc6** The **Delayed Exchange Variation Deferred** (or **Exchange Variation Doubly Deferred**) (ECO C85), 6.Bxc6, loses a tempo compared to the Exchange Variation, though in compensation, the black knight on f6 and bishop on e7 are awkwardly placed. The knight on f6 prevents Black from supporting the e-pawn with f7–f6, and the bishop is somewhat passively posted on e7.

**Centre Attack: 6.d4** The **Centre Attack** (or **Centre Variation**) (ECO C84), 6.d4, leads to sharp play. Black can hold the balance, but it is easy to make a misstep.

**Worrall Attack: 6.Qe2** Worrall Attack 6.Qe2

In the **Worrall Attack** (ECO C86), White substitutes 6.Qe2 for 6.Re1. The idea is that the queen will support the e-pawn leaving the rook free to move to d1 to support the advance of the d-pawn, although there isn't always time

for this. Play normally continues 6...b5 7.Bb3 followed by 7...0-0 8.c3 and 8...d5 or 8...d6.

Paul Keres played the line several times. More recently, Sergei Tiviakov has played it, as has Nigel Short, who played it twice in his 1992 match against Anatoly Karpov and won both games.

**Averbakh Variation: 6.Re1 d6** Averbakh Variation 6...d6

In the **Averbakh Variation** (C87), named for Yuri Averbakh, Black defends the threatened e-pawn with 6...d6 instead of driving away the white bishop with the more common 6...b5. This defence shares some similarities with the Modern Steinitz and Russian Defences as Black avoids the ...b5 advance that weakens the queenside. White can reply with either 7.Bxc6 bxc6 8.d4 or 7.c3 Bg4 (it is too late for Black to transpose into the more usual lines of the Closed Defence, because 7...b5 would allow 8.Bc2, saving White a tempo over the two-move sequence Bb3–c2 found in other variations). The pin temporarily prevents White from playing d2–d4. In response, White can either force d4 with 8.h3 Bh5 9.Bxc6 bxc6 10.d4, or postpone d4 for the time being and play 8.d3 followed by manoeuvring the queen knight to the kingside with Nbd2–f1–g3.

**Trajković Variation: 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 Bb7** Trajković Variation 6...b5 7.Bb3 Bb7

An alternative to 7...d6 is 7...Bb7. This is known as the **Trajković Variation**. Black may sacrifice a pawn with 8.c3 d5 9.exd5 Nxd5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.Rxe5 Nf4.

**7...0-0** After 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3, Black often plays 7...0-0. Here White can play 8.c3, but he has other moves. Alternatives are 8.a4, 8.h3, 8.d4, and 8.d3, which are often called “anti-Marshall” moves. White can also play 8.Nc3 with the idea of playing 9.Nd5 later.

In the case White does play 8.c3, Black can and often does play 8...d6, which is just the main line in another order. But he can also play 8...d5 for the Marshall Attack.

**Marshall Attack: 7...0-0 8.c3 d5** Marshall Attack after 11...c6, the most common move in modern play.<sup>[8]</sup> In 1918 Marshall played 11...Nf6.<sup>[9]</sup>

One of Black’s more aggressive alternatives is the **Marshall Attack**: after 3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 0-0 8.c3 Black plays the gambit 8...d5, sacrificing a

pawn. The main line begins with 9.exd5 Nxd5 (9...e4?!, the **Herman Steiner** variation, is considered weaker) 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.Rxe5 c6 (Marshall’s original moves, 11...Nf6, and 11...Bb7 are considered inferior, but have also yielded good results at top levels of play for Black. GM Joel Benjamin suggests that 11...Bb7 is inferior due to 12.Qf3). Black will attack and force weaknesses in White’s **kingside** which has been stripped of defenders. White’s first decision is whether to play 12.d3 or 12.d4. In either case it is apparent that the move 8.c3 is no longer helpful to White. The Black attack can be quite treacherous for White. Since Black’s compensation is based on **positional** rather than **tactical** considerations, it is difficult or perhaps impossible to find a refutation, and variations have been analyzed very deeply (sometimes beyond move 30) without coming to a definite determination over the soundness of Black’s gambit. The Marshall Attack is a very sharp opening system in which a great amount of theoretical knowledge is vital, and many White players, including Garry Kasparov, avoid it by playing one of the anti-Marshall systems, 8.d4, 8.a4 or 8.h3 instead of 8.c3.<sup>[8]</sup>

This gambit became famous when Frank James Marshall used it as a **prepared variation** against José Raúl Capablanca in 1918; nevertheless Capablanca found a way through the complications and won.<sup>[9]</sup> It is often said that Marshall had kept this gambit a secret for use against Capablanca since his defeat in their 1909 match.<sup>[10]</sup> The most common counterclaim is that Marshall had used a similar approach in 1917 against Walter Frere.<sup>[11]</sup> However Edward Winter found: no clear evidence of the date for Frere vs Marshall; several games between 1910 and 1918 where Marshall passed up opportunities to use the Marshall Attack against Capablanca; and an 1893 game that used the same line as in Frere vs Marshall.<sup>[12]</sup>

Improvements to Black’s play were found (Marshall played 11...Nf6!? originally, but later discovered 11...c6!) and the Marshall Attack was adopted by top players including Boris Spassky, John Nunn and more recently Michael Adams. In the **Classical World Chess Championship 2004**, challenger Peter Leko used the Marshall to win an important game against World Champion Vladimir Kramnik. Currently, Armenian Grandmaster Levon Aronian is one of the main advocates for the Marshall Attack.<sup>[13]</sup>

**Main line: 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0**

Main line after 8...0-0

The main lines of the Closed Ruy Lopez continue 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0. White can now play 9.d3 or 9.d4, but by far the most common move is 9.h3 which prepares d4 while preventing the awkward pin ...Bg4. This can be considered

the main line of the opening as a whole and thousands of top-level games have reached this position. White aims to play d4 followed by Nbd2–f1–g3, which would firmly support e4 with the bishops on open diagonals and both knights threatening Black's kingside. Black will try to prevent this knight manoeuvre by expanding on the queenside, taking action in the centre, or putting pressure on e4.

After 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0, we have:

- 9.d3 (Pilnik Variation)
- 9.d4 (Yates Variation)
  - 9.d4 Bg4 (Bogoljubow Variation)
  - 9.d4 Bg4 10.a4 (Yates Variation, Short Attack)
- 9.a3 (Suetin Variation)
- 9.Bc2 (Lutikov Variation)
- 9.h3
  - 9...Na5 (Chigorin Variation)
  - 9...Nb8 (Breyer Variation)
  - 9...Bb7 (Zaitsev Variation)
  - 9...Nd7 (Karpov Variation)
  - 9...Be6 (Kholmov Variation)
  - 9...h6 (Smyslov Variation)
  - 9...Qd7 (Smyslov Variation)
  - 9...a5 (Keres Variation)

**Pilnik Variation: 9.d3** The **Pilnik Variation**, named for **Herman Pilnik**, is also known as the **Teichmann Variation** from the game **Teichmann–Schlechter**, Carlsbad 1911. White plays 9.d3 intending to later advance to d4 under favourable circumstances. Although d2–d3–d4 appears to lose a tempo compared to d2–d4, White may be able to omit h3 regaining the tempo, especially if Black plays ...Bb7.

**Yates Variation and Bogoljubow Variation: 9.d4** White usually plays 9.h3 instead of 9.d4 (the **Yates Variation**) because after 9.d4 Bg4 (the **Bogoljubow Variation**), the pin of the white king knight is troublesome. The variation takes its name from the game **Capablanca–Bogoljubow**, London 1922.

**Chigorin Variation: 9.h3 Na5** Chigorin Variation after 11.d4 Qc7

The **Chigorin Variation** was refined by **Mikhail Chigorin** around the turn of the 20th century and became the primary Black defence to the Ruy Lopez for more than fifty

years. With 9...Na5 Black chases the white bishop from the a2–g8 diagonal and frees the c-pawn for queenside expansion. After 10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 the classical Black follow up is 11...Qc7, reinforcing e5 and placing the queen on the c-file which may later become open after ...cxd4. Other Black moves in this position are 11...Bb7 and 11...Nd7; the latter was adopted by **Keres** a few times in the 1960s. The Chigorin Variation has declined in popularity because Black must spend some time bringing his offside knight on a5 back into the game.

The Chigorin is divided into four **ECO classifications**. In C96, Black or White deviate after 10.Bc2, and do not reach the classical main line position 10...c5 11.d4 Qc7. In C97, White proceeds from the diagram with 12.a4, 12.d5, 12.b4, or the main line 12.Nbd2 when Black responds with ...Be6, ...Rd8, ...Re8, ...Bb7 or ...Bd7. The C98 classification covers 12.Nbd2 Nc6, while C99 covers 12.Nbd2 cxd4 13.cxd4.

**Breyer Variation: 9.h3 Nb8** Breyer Variation 9...Nb8

The **Breyer Variation** was recommended by **Gyula Breyer** as early as 1911,<sup>[14]</sup> but there are no known game records in which Breyer employed this line. The Breyer Variation did not become popular until the 1960s when it was adopted by **Boris Spassky** and others. In particular, Spassky's back to back wins over **Mikhail Tal** at **Tbilisi** in 1965 did much to enhance its reputation, and Spassky has a career-plus score with the Breyer. The variation is the choice of many top level players today as White has had trouble proving an advantage against it.

With 9...Nb8 Black frees the c-pawn and intends to route the knight to d7 where it supports e5. If White fortifies the centre with 10.d3 the opening is classified **ECO code** C94. The more common continuation, 10.d4, is **ECO C95**. The main line continues 10.d4 Nbd7 11.Nbd2 Bb7 12.Bc2 Re8 13.Nf1 Bf8. Black is threatening to win the e4-pawn via ...exd4 uncovering an attack on the pawn, so White plays 14.Ng3. Black generally plays 14...g6 to stop White's knight from going to f5. White then usually tries to attack the Black queenside via 16.a4. Black seeks counterplay in the centre via 16...c5. White can attack either the kingside or the queenside. This forces resolution of the centre via 17.d5. Black can exploit the weak squares on the queenside via 17...c4. White will try to attack on the kingside via 18.Bg5, moving his forces to the kingside. Black will kick the bishop with 18...h6. The logical retreat is 19.Be3, which is met by 19...Nc5. White plays 20.Qd2, forcing 20...h5. The point of this manoeuvre was to weaken Black's kingside.

**Zaitsev Variation: 9.h3 Bb7** Zaitsev Variation 9...Bb7

The **Zaitsev Variation** (also called the **Flohr–Zaitsev Variation**) was advocated by **Igor Zaitsev**, who was one of **Karpov's** trainers for many years. A Karpov favourite, the Zaitsev remains one of the most important variations of the Ruy Lopez. With 9...Bb7 Black prepares to put more pressure on e4 after 10.d4 Re8 11.Nbd2 Bf8 when play can become very sharp and tactical. One drawback of this line is that White can force Black to choose a different defence or allow a draw by repetition of position with 11.Ng5 Rf8 12.Nf3.

**Karpov Variation: 9.h3 Nd7** Karpov tried 9...Nd7 several times in the 1990 World Championship match, but **Kasparov** achieved a significant advantage against it in the 18th game. It is solid but slightly passive. Confusingly 9...Nd7 is also called the Chigorin Variation so there are two variations of the Ruy Lopez with that name, but 9...Na5 is the move more commonly associated with **Chigorin**. This defense is also known as the Keres Variation, after Paul Keres.

**Kholmov Variation: 9.h3 Be6** The **Kholmov Variation**, 9...Be6, was popular in the 1980s but is now rarely played. The main line runs 10.d4 Bxb3 11.axb3 (11.Qxb3 is another option) exd4 12.cxd4 d5 13.e5 Ne4 14.Nc3 f5 15.exf6 Bxf6 16.Nxe4 dxe4 17.Rxe4 Qd5 18.Rg4, when it has been shown that White's extra pawn is more valuable than Black's more active and harmonised pieces.

**Smyslov Variation: 9.h3 h6** The **Smyslov Variation** (ECO C93) is a plan similar to that of the Zaitsev Variation. With 9...h6 Black prepares to play 10...Re8 and 11...Bf8 without fear of 10.Ng5. The loss of a tempo with 9...h6 gives White enough time to complete the Nbd2–f1–g3 manoeuvre, and the pawn move can also weaken Black's kingside. The Zaitsev can be considered to be an improved Smyslov in which Black tries to save a tempo by omitting ...h6.

Kasparov played the Smyslov Variation in a loss to the **Deep Blue** chess computer in **Game 2** of their 1997 match. **Svetozar Gligorić** has been the most prolific C93 player.<sup>[15]</sup>

**Smyslov Variation: 9.h3 Qd7** 9...Qd7 is another variation by Smyslov.

**3.2.4 Black defences other than 3...a6**

Of the variations in this section, the Berlin and Schliemann Defences are the most popular today, followed by the Classical Defence.<sup>[16]</sup>

- 3...Nge7 (Cozio Defence)
- 3...g6 (Smyslov Defence)
- 3...Nd4 (Bird's Defence)
- 3...d6 (Steinitz Defence)
- 3...f5!? (Schliemann Defence)
- 3...Bc5 (Classical or Cordel Defence)
- 3...Nf6 (Berlin Defence)

and other less-common third moves for Black.

**Cozio Defence: 3...Nge7**

The **Cozio Defence** (part of ECO C60), 3...Nge7, is distinctly old-fashioned, and the least popular of the defences at Black's third move. Although **Bent Larsen** used it occasionally with success, it remains one of the least explored variations of the Ruy Lopez.

**Smyslov Defence: 3...g6**

The **Smyslov Defence**, **Fianchetto Defence**, **Barnes Defence**, or **Pillsbury Defence** (part of ECO C60), 3...g6, is a quiet positional system played occasionally by **Vasily Smyslov** and **Boris Spassky**, becoming popular in the 1980s when it was shown that 4.c3 a6! gives Black a good game.

It was later discovered that 4.d4 exd4 5.Bg5 gives White the advantage, and as such the variation is rarely played today. An interesting gambit line 4.d4 exd4 5.c3 has also been recommended by **Alexander Khalifman**, although some of the resulting positions have yet to be extensively tested.

**Bird's Defence: 3...Nd4**

**Bird's Defence** (ECO C61), 3...Nd4, is an uncommon variation in modern praxis. With careful play White is held to gain an advantage.

This defence was published in 1843 in Paul Rudolf von Bilguer's *Handbuch des Schachspiels* and explored by Henry Bird in the late 19th century. Bird played it as Black at least 25 times, scoring +9 =3 –13 (nine wins, three draws, thirteen losses).<sup>[17]</sup> Bird's Defence was later used a few times

in tournament play by Siegbert Tarrasch, Boris Spassky, and Alexander Khalifman. Although it is still sometimes seen as a surprise weapon, no strong master since Bird has adopted it regularly.<sup>[18]</sup> The World Champion Magnus Carlsen played it as black in the 2014 Chess Olympiad against Ivan Šarić and lost.<sup>[19]</sup>

### Steinitz Defence: 3...d6

The **Steinitz Defence** (also called the **Old Steinitz Defence**) (ECO C62), 3...d6, is solid but passive and cramped. Although the favourite of the first world champion Wilhelm Steinitz, and often played by world champions and expert defensive players Emanuel Lasker, José Capablanca, and occasionally by Vasily Smyslov, it largely fell into disuse after World War I, as its inherent passivity spurred a search for more active means of defending the Spanish. White can force Black to concede the strongpoint at e5 (see **Tarrasch Trap**), a significant but not fatal concession.

The deferred variant of this defence (3...a6 4.Ba4 d6) offers Black a freer position and is more popular.

### Schliemann Defence: 3...f5

The **Schliemann 's Defence** or **Schliemann–Jaenisch Gambit** (ECO C63), 3...f5!?, is a sharp line in which Black plays for a kingside attack, frequently sacrificing one or two pawns. Considered by many to be somewhat dubious, it is occasionally used in top-level play as a surprise weapon. This variation was originated by Carl Jaenisch in 1847 and is sometimes named after him. Although later named for German lawyer Adolf Karl Wilhelm Schliemann (1817–72), the line Schliemann actually played in the 1860s was a gambit variation of the Cordel Defence (3...Bc5 4.c3 f5). The most common responses for White to 3...f5!? are 4.d3 or 4.Nc3, with play after 4.Nc3 fxe4 5.Nxe4 going 5...d5, with great complications to follow, or 5...Nf6, which generally leads to quieter play.

### Classical Defence: 3...Bc5

The **Classical Defence** or **Cordel Defence** (ECO C64), 3...Bc5, is possibly the oldest defence to the Ruy Lopez, and has been played occasionally by former world champion Boris Spassky and Boris Gulko. White's most common reply is 4.c3, when Black may choose to play 4...f5, the **Cordel Gambit**, leading to sharp play, after which 5.d4 is considered the strongest reply. More solid for Black is instead, 4...Nf6, when 5.0-0 0-0 6.d4 Bb6 leads to the **Benelux Variation**. White's principal alternative to 4.c3 is 4.0-0, when Black can transpose to the Classical Berlin with 4...Nf6 or play 4...Nd4 which isn't so bad for Black.

An alternative for White is the **fork trick** 4. Nxe5. Few games have been played with this line, but there is no clear refutation for Black. The name derives from White's play if Black captures the knight: 4...Nxe5 5. d4.

### Berlin Defence: 3...Nf6

Berlin Defence 3...Nf6

The **Berlin Defence**, 3...Nf6, has long had a reputation for solidity and drawishness and is sometimes called "the **Berlin Wall**".<sup>[20]</sup> The Berlin Defence was played in the late 19th century and early 20th century by Emanuel Lasker and others, who typically answered 4.0-0 with 4...d6 in the style of the Steinitz Variation. This approach ultimately fell out of favour, as had the old form of the Steinitz, due to its passivity, and the entire variation became rare. Arthur Bisguier played the Berlin for decades, but always chose the variation 4.0-0 Nxe4. Then in 2000, Vladimir Kramnik used the line as a drawing weapon against Garry Kasparov in Classical World Chess Championship 2000, following which the Berlin has experienced a remarkable renaissance: even players with a dynamic style such as Alexei Shirov, Veselin Topalov, and Kasparov himself have tried it, and Magnus Carlsen and Viswanathan Anand both used it (Carlsen extensively so) during the 2013 World Chess Championship and 2014 World Chess Championship.

Open Berlin Defence, l'Hermet (Queenswap) Variation after 8...Kxd8

Since Black's third move does not threaten to win the e-pawn—if Black captures it, White will win back the pawn on e5 (Seirawan 2003:52)—White usually castles. After 4.0-0, Black can play either the solid 4...Nxe4 (the Open Variation) or the more combative 4...Bc5 (the Berlin Classical Variation). After 4...Nxe4 5.d4 (5.Re1 Nd6 6.Nxe5 is also reasonable) Nd6 (5...Be7 is the Rio de Janeiro Variation) 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 Nf5 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8 (l'Hermet Variation), White is considered to have a small advantage in light of his somewhat better pawn structure and Black's awkwardly placed king. Black, by way of compensation, possesses the **bishop pair** and his position has no weaknesses, so it is difficult for White to exploit his structural superiority without opening the game for Black's bishops; all four of the games in the Kasparov–Kramnik match in which this line was employed ended in draws. An alternative for Black, though seldom seen since the 1890s, is 6...bxc6 7.dxe5 Nb7, although White keeps an advantage despite Black's two bishops, as it is difficult for him to gain active counterplay.

White's move 4.Nc3 transposes to the Four Knights Game, Spanish Variation.

Another possible try for White is 4.d3. This is “Steinitz’s move, with which he scored many spectacular successes during his long reign as World Champion”.<sup>[21]</sup> The main replies for Black are 4...d6 and 4...Bc5. In both cases, White commonly plays 5. c3. An uncommon and dubious reply is 4...Ne7, which tries to set up the **Mortimer Trap**.

The Berlin is assigned ECO codes C65–67. Code C65 covers alternatives to 4.0-0 as well as 4.0-0 Bc5. Code C66 covers 4.0-0 d6, while C67 is 4.0-0 Nxe4.

### Other

Less-common third moves for Black:

- 3...Bb4 (Alapin Defence)
- 3...Qf6
- 3...f6 (Nuremberg Defence)
- 3...Qe7 (Vinogradov Variation)
- 3...Na5 (Pollock’s Defence)
- 3...g5 (Brentano Defence)
- 3...Bd6
- 3...b6? (Rotary Defence or Albany Defence)
- 3...d5? (Sawyer’s Gambit or Spanish Countergambit)
- 3...Be7 (Lucena Defence)
- 3...a5 (Bulgarian Variation)

### 3.2.5 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

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- [2] Edward Winter, "The Berlin Defence (Ruy López)", *Chess Notes*
- [3] Lane, Gary (2006). *The Ruy Lopez Explained*. Batsford. ISBN 0-7134-8978-2.
- [4] Morphy played 3...a6 in the second (a draw) and fourth (a win for Morphy) games of his 1858 match with **Adolf Anderssen**. Philip W. Sergeant, *Morphy’s Games of Chess*, Dover, 1957, pp. 106–08, 110–12. ISBN 0-486-20386-7. The move had been played much earlier, however. Charles Henry Stanley played 3...a6 twice in his 1845 match, held in Morphy’s hometown of New Orleans, against **Eugène Rousseau** for the **United States Chess Championship**. Stanley lost both games, although he won the match. Andy Soltis and Gene McCormick, “The Morphy Defense”, *Chess Life*, August 1984, pp. 26–27. Howard Staunton also mentioned 3...a6 in his *Chess-Player’s Handbook*, first published in 1847. Howard Staunton, *The Chess-Player’s Handbook* (2nd ed. 1848), Henry C. Bohn, pp. 147, 149.
- [5] Harry Golombek, *Chess: A History*, G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1976, pp. 117–18.
- [6] Müller & Lamprecht, pp. 147–48
- [7] *MCO-14*, p.54
- [8] Silman, J. (2004). “**Marshall Attack**”. Retrieved 2009-06-01.
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- [13] Nandanan, Hari Hara (2 October 2011). “Carlsen stops Ivanchuk, Anand held”. *The Times of India*. Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. Retrieved 29 May 2015. Anand carefully employed the anti-Marshall against Aronian, an acknowledged expert in the Marshall. The Indian waited for things to unfold rather than forcing the pace in his characteristic way but after waiting for sometime on move 21 he deviated from the known track. Though he seemed to have got something out of the opening, the World champion did not have anything special.
- [14] Barden (1963), pp. 15–16
- [15] Online Chess Database and Community
- [16] New in Chess Base
- [17] Bird Defence games played by Bird. ChessGames.com. Retrieved on 2009-01-29.
- [18] Shaw, John, *Starting Out: The Ruy Lopez*, p. 36
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[21] Horowitz and Reinfeld 1954, p. 59

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- This article includes text from David Wheeler's *A Beginner's Garden of Chess Openings*, originally under the GNU Free Documentation License.

### 3.2.7 Further reading

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### 3.2.8 External links

- Opening Report. Marshall Counterattack: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 0-0 8.c3 d5 (6074 games)
- Ruy Lopez analysis video

## 3.3 Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation

The **Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation** is a variation of the Ruy Lopez chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bb5 a6
4. Bxc6

Black may recapture on c6 with either **pawn**; though 4...bxc6 is playable, 4...dxc6 is almost always chosen at master level. Black has gained the **bishop pair** at the cost of a weakened **pawn structure**, due to his doubled pawns on c6 and c7. In the **Exchange Variation**, by exchanging the "Spanish bishop", the White aims to reach an **endgame** in which he has the superior pawn structure, which may become an important factor, thus Black is compelled to strive for an active position, generally avoiding piece exchanges.

### 3.3.1 ECO codes

There are two **ECO** classifications for the Exchange Variation.

- ECO code C68 covers 4...bxc6 and 4...dxc6, with White's response of 5.d4 or 5.Nc3 to either capture. After 4...dxc6 White should not capture with 5.Nxe5 as 5...Qd4 forks the **knight** and **pawn**, thus regaining the material, leading to positions where White has forfeited his structural advantage—the compensation

for ceding the two bishops. Black has a variety of playable responses to the popular 4...dxc6 5.0-0 (the **Barendregt Variation**, which **Bobby Fischer** played with success). White now threatens 6.Nxe5 because the sequence 6...Qd4 7.Nf3 Qxe4 to regain the pawn, now fails to 8.Re1 pinning and winning the queen. ECO code C68 examines these responses to 5.0-0: 5...Qf6, 5...Qe7, 5...Bd6, 5...Qd6, or 5...Bg4 (all directly defending the e5-pawn, except 5...Bg4 which indirectly defends by pinning the knight). The moves 5...Be6, 5...Be7, and 5...Ne7 are less common moves which have never achieved popularity. The idea behind these moves is that if White plays to win a pawn with 6.Nxe5, 6...Qd4 7.Nf3 Qxe4 is again playable, as the Black minor piece on e6 or e7 blocks the e-file.

- ECO code C69 treats the variations arising from the continuation 4...dxc6 5.0-0 f6.

### 3.3.2 Barendregt Variation: 5.0-0

There are several main replies to the Barendregt Variation, 5.0-0.

#### 5...Bg4

The most aggressive move against the Barendregt Variation is 5...Bg4. After 6.h3, Black has possibilities such as 6...Bh5 or 6...Bxf3, but the most modern and active variation is 6...h5. White cannot take the bishop with 7.hxg4 because Black plays 7...hxg4, attacking the knight. If the knight moves, 8...Qh4 threatens **checkmate** with 9...Qh2# or 9...Qh1#. After 8...Qh4, if White tries 9.f3, trying to escape via f2 after a queen **check**, Black replies 9...g3 with inevitable mate.

After 6...h5, the most common continuation is 7.d3 Qf6 8.Nbd2 Ne7 9.Re1 Ng6 and now an interesting line is: 10.hxg4!?. After 10...hxg4, 11.g3! offering back the piece (White should not try to hold onto the knight, as it would be similar to the position after 7.hxg4?? hxg4). After 11.g3 gxf3 12.Qxf3, White is safe and has the superior pawn structure, which is considered to offer a small advantage in the ensuing queenless middlegame.

#### 5...f6

A move that was popular amongst masters during Fischer's reign and is still popular today is 5...f6. White's most active and modern approach to this defense is 6.d4, after which Black has two options: 6...Bg4 and 6...exd4. The move 6...Bg4 can be met also by two options: 7.dxe5 and 7.c3.

On 7.dxe5 Qxd1 8.Rxd1 fxe5, White cannot take the e5-pawn with the knight because the knight is pinned by the bishop. Multiple trades have occurred, however, bringing the position closer to an endgame, which is beneficial for White since he has the better pawn structure.

The second move against 5...f6 6.d4 is 6...exd4. White should play 7.Qxd4 (Fischer chose the more obscure 7.Nxd4 in two Exchange Variation games in his **1992 match with Boris Spassky**), offering a trade of queens which Black should take or else he is clearly worse. After 7...Qxd4 8.Nxd4 c5 9.Nb3 (9.Ne2 is another line; however Fischer often preferred 9.Nb3) and White will develop freely by developing their bishop to e3, their b1 knight to c3 or d2 depending on the position and bringing one of their rooks to d1, usually the rook on f1.

#### 5...Qd6

This is often called the Bronstein Variation. White's popular choices are 6.Na3 and 6.d3. After 6.d4 exd4 7.Nxd4, this move permits 7...Bd7 followed by ...0-0-0. Other ways for White to proceed include 6.a4 or 6.c3.

#### 5...Bd6

The other main move in the Barendregt Variation is 5...Bd6. White again goes 6.d4, where Black can play either 6...exd4 or 6...Bg4.

The move 6...exd4 is not the best move. White captures the pawn back with 7.Qxd4 and stands clearly better. An example of a massacre where Black is on the losing side is as follows: 7...f6 8.Nc3<sup>[note 1]</sup> Bg4? 9.e5! attacking the g4-bishop with the queen and the d6-bishop with the pawn. After 9...Bxf3 10. exd6, Black cannot capture the pawn because the f3-bishop is **hanging**, and after 10...Bh5 11.Re1+ Kf8 12.Qc5, attacking the bishop on h5 while threatening dxc7 **discovered check**, winning the queen, White has a winning advantage.

The move 6...Bg4 is the better move in this line. White has a couple of possible moves, but the best line is 7.dxe5 Bxf3 8.Qxf3 Bxe5. Numerous trades have occurred, so White is satisfied. After 9.Nd2 Ne7 10.Nc4 Ng6 11.Nxe5 Nxe5 12.Qg3 (Salazar-Smith, Groningen 1976/77), White had the upper hand (**Gipslis**).

### 3.3.3 Endgame

#### Max Euwe, 1940

White wins with either side to move

If White can exchange all pieces, he has a big advantage in the **endgame**, due to the **pawn structure**. Max Euwe gave the pure pawn ending (without pieces—see diagram) resulting after the exchange of White’s d-pawn for Black’s e-pawn as a win for White, and the winning procedure is detailed in (Müller & Lamprecht 2007:147–49).

### 3.3.4 References

#### Notes

- [1] ECO 2nd edition considers 8.b3, 8.c4, 8.Be3, 8.Nbd2, 8.Rd1, 8.Re1, and 8.e5, with all lines leading to balanced positions.

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- Shaw, John (2003), *Starting Out: The Ruy Lopez*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 1-85744-321-7
- Taulbut, Shaun (1996), *Understanding the Spanish*, Batsford, ISBN 978-0-7134-7633-0

### 3.3.5 Further reading

- Kinsman, Andrew (1998), *The Spanish Exchange*, Batsford, ISBN 0-7134-8471-3

## 3.4 Italian Game

The **Italian Game** is a family of chess openings beginning with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4

The Italian Game is one of the oldest recorded chess openings; it occurs in the Göttingen manuscript and was developed by players such as Damiano and Polerio in the 16th century, and later by Greco in 1620, who gave the game its main line. It has been extensively analyzed for more than

300 years. The term Italian Game is sometimes used interchangeably with **Giuoco Piano**, though that term also refers particularly to play after 3...Bc5. The Italian is regarded as an **Open Game**, or Double King’s Pawn game.

The opening’s defining move is the White bishop move to c4 (the so-called “**Italian bishop**”) in preparation for an early attack on Black’s vulnerable f7-square. As such the game is typified by aggressive play, where Black’s best chances are often vigorous counterattacks. Most grandmasters have largely abandoned the Italian Game in favour of the **Ruy Lopez** (3.Bb5) and **Scotch** (3.d4), considering those two openings better tries for a long-term advantage, but the Italian is still popular in **correspondence chess**, where players are allowed access to published theory, and in games between amateurs.

### 3.4.1 Main variations

#### 3...Bc5

Until the 19th century the main line of the Italian Game. Dubbed the **Giuoco Piano** (“Quiet Game”) in contradistinction to the more aggressive lines then being developed, this continues 4.d3, the positional Giuoco Pianissimo (“Very Quiet Game”), or the main line 4.c3 (the original Giuoco Piano) leading to positions first analyzed by Greco in the 17th century, and revitalized at the turn of the 20th by the Moller Attack.

This variation also contains the aggressive **Evans Gambit** (4.b4), the **Jerome Gambit** (4.Bxf7+), and the **Italian Gambit** (4.d4) – all 19th-century attempts to open up the game.

#### 3...Nf6

The more aggressive **Two Knights Defense**; again, this is more in the nature of a counterattack, and some (e.g. **Chigorin**) have proposed it be renamed so. The Two Knights Defence contains the knife-edged Traxler/Wilkes-Barre Variation, the aggressive Fegatello (or **Fried Liver**) Attack, and the complex **Max Lange Attack**.

#### 3...Be7

The **Hungarian Defence**, a solid, drawish game which is often chosen in tournament play to avoid the complexities and risks of the other lines.

### 3.4.2 Uncommon Black third moves

**3...d6**

The **Semi-Italian Opening**, a solid positional line; this was popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but hardly seen now.

**3...f5**

The **Rousseau Gambit**. White does best to avoid the pawn offer with 4.d3.

**3...Nd4**

This ostensibly weak third move by Black, known as the **Blackburne Shilling Gambit**, is a false gambit expectant upon White falling into the trap of capturing Black's undefended e5-pawn with 4.Nxe5. While generally considered time-wasting against more experienced players due to the loss Black is put at should the trap be avoided, it has ensnared many a chess novice and could provide a quick and easy mate against those unfamiliar with the line.

**3...others**

3...g6 allows White to attack with 4.d4 (4.d3 has also been tried) exd4 5.c3! (5.Nxd4 and 5.Bg5 are also possible) dxc3 6.Nxc3 Bg7 and now 7.Qb3 (Unzicker) or 7.Bg5 (O'Kelly).

Unzicker has analyzed 3...Qf6?! 4.Nc3 Nge7 5.Nb5 and White has an advantage.

**3.4.3 See also**

- Chess opening
- *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*
- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

**3.4.4 References**

- D. Bronstein: *200 Open Games* (1973). Reprint Dover Publications, 1991, ISBN 0-486-26857-8
- Burgess, Graham (2000), *The Mammoth Book of Chess* (2nd ed.), Carroll & Graf, ISBN 978-0-7867-0725-6
- Y. Estrin: *The Two Knights Defence* (1983) ISBN 0-7134-3991-2

- T. Harding and G. S. Botterill: *The Italian Game* (1977), Batsford, ISBN 0-7134-3261-6
- D. Levy, K. O'Donnell: *Oxford Encyclopaedia of Chess Games Vol I (1485-1866)* (1981) ISBN 0-19-217571-8
- A. Matanović: *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings Vol C* (1981) ISBN 0-7134-2697-7
- V. Zagorodov: *Romantic Chess Openings* (1982) ISBN 0-7134-3623-9

**3.4.5 Further reading**

- Colins, Sam (2005), *Understanding the Chess Openings*, Gambit Publications, ISBN 1-904600-28-X

**3.4.6 External links****3.5 Hungarian Defense**

The **Hungarian Defense** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Be7

The Hungarian Defense is a line in the **Italian Game** typically chosen as a quiet response to the aggressive 3.Bc4. The opening is seldom seen in modern play.

The variation takes its name from a **correspondence game** between **Paris** and **Pest, Hungary** played from 1843–45, but was first analyzed by **Cozio** in the 18th century.<sup>[1]</sup> It has been played on occasion by some **grandmasters** with strong defensive-positional styles, including **Reshevsky**, **Hort**, and former **World Champions** **Petrosian** and **Smyslov**.

With the move 3...Be7, Black avoids the complexities of the **Giuoco Piano** (3...Bc5), **Evans Gambit** (3...Bc5 4.b4), and **Two Knights Defense** (3...Nf6). White has an advantage in space and freer development, so Black must be prepared to defend a cramped position.

**3.5.1 4.d4 exd4**

White's best response is 4.d4 when 4...exd4 5.Nxd4 would transpose into a variation of the **Scotch Game** that gives White a spatial advantage. Weaker is 5.c3, hoping for 5...dxc3?! 6.Qd5!, after which Black resigned in the game

Midjord–Scharf, *Nice* Olympiad 1974 (though Black could have tried 6...Nh6 7.Bxh6 0-0 when 8.Bc1?! Nb4 9.Qd1 c2 wins back the piece, so White should play 8.Bxg7 Kxg7 9.Nxc3 with advantage.<sup>[1]</sup>) However, 5...Na5!, recommended by Chigorin,<sup>[2]</sup> forces White to give up the bishop pair with 6.Qxd4 or sacrifice a pawn.

### 3.5.2 4.d4 d6

Alternatively, Black generally tries to hold the center with 4...d6, when White has a choice of plans, each of which should be enough to secure a slight advantage. White can simplify to a slightly better queenless middlegame with 5.dxe5 dxe5 (5...Nxe5? 6.Nxe5 dxe5 7.Qh5! and White’s double attack on e5 and f7 wins a pawn) 6.Qxd8+ (6.Bd5!? is also possible) Bxd8 7.Nc3 Nf6. White can also close the center with 5.d5 Nb8, followed by Bd3 and expansion on the queenside with c4, resulting in positions resembling those from the Old Indian Defense. Finally, with 5.Nc3 White can retain tension in the center and obtain active piece play.

Harding and Botterill, in their 1977 book on the Italian Game, conclude that, “The Hungarian Defence can only be played for a draw. White should have an edge in most lines.”<sup>[3]</sup>

### 3.5.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 3.5.4 Notes

[1] Harding & Botterill (1977), p. 130.

[2] Harding & Botterill (1977), pp. 130-31.

[3] Harding & Botterill (1977), p. 134.

### 3.5.5 References

- T. D. Harding and G. S. Botterill (1977). *The Italian Game*. Batsford. ISBN 0-7134-3261-6.
- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- De Firmian, Nick (1999). *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-14*. Random House Puzzles & Games. ISBN 0-8129-3084-3.

## 3.6 Two Knights Defense

The **Two Knights Defense** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Nf6

First recorded by Polerio<sup>[1]</sup> (c. 1550 – c. 1610) in the late 16th century, this line of the Italian Game was extensively developed in the 19th century. Black’s third move is a more aggressive defense than the *Giuoco Piano* which would result from 3...Bc5. In fact, David Bronstein suggested that the term “defense” does not fit, and that the name “Chigorin Counterattack” would be more appropriate.<sup>[2]</sup> The Two Knights has been adopted as Black by many aggressive players including Mikhail Chigorin and Paul Keres, and World Champions Mikhail Tal and Boris Spassky. The theory of this opening has been explored extensively in correspondence chess by players such as Hans Berliner and Yakov Estrin.

### 3.6.1 Main variations

#### 4.Ng5

German master Siegbert Tarrasch called 4.Ng5 a “duffer’s move” (*ein richtiger Stümperzug*) and Soviet opening theorist Vasily Panov called it “primitive”, but this attack on f7 practically wins a pawn by force. Despite Tarrasch’s criticism, 4.Ng5 has remained a popular choice for White and it has been played by World Champions Wilhelm Steinitz, Bobby Fischer, Anatoly Karpov, Garry Kasparov, and Viswanathan Anand.

**4...Nxe4?!** 4...Nxe4?! must be handled carefully:<sup>[3]</sup> 5.Bxf7+! (5.Nxf7? Qh4! 6.g3 [6.0-0 Bc5!] Qh3 7.Nxh8 Qg2 8.Rf1 Nd4 9.Qh5+ g6 10.Nxg6 hxg6 11.Qxg6+ Kd8) 5...Ke7 6.d4! d5 (6...h6 7.Nxe4 Kxf7 and now either 8.dxe5 Qe8 9.f4 d6 10.0-0 or 8.d5 Ne7 9.Qh5+ g6 10.Qxe5 give White the advantage) 7.Nc3! (best, discovered by Soviet player Lopukhin) Nxc3 8.bxc3 Qd6 (8...Bf5 9.Qf3±; 8...e4 9.f3!) 9.a4! Kd8 10.Bg8! (Estrin) Ke8 11.Bxh7 and White has the edge (Gligorić).

#### 4...Bc5 (Traxler Variation or Wilkes-Barre Variation)

Czech problemist Karel Traxler played the extremely sharp 4...Bc5 in Reinisch–Traxler, Hostouň 1896. Some decades later, several Pennsylvania chess amateurs, (mainly K.

Williams) analyzed the variation and decided to name it after their hometown **Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania**, so today 4...Bc5 is known as both the Traxler Variation and (in the U.S.A. and the United Kingdom<sup>[4]</sup> only) the Wilkes-Barre Variation.

This bold move ignores White's attack on f7 and leads to wild play.

White can play 5.d4, 5.Nxf7, or 5.Bxf7+. After 5.d4 d5!, White's best is to go into an equal endgame after 6.dxc5 dxc4 7.Qxd8+. Other sixth moves have scored very badly for White.

The usual move used to be 5.Nxf7, but this is very complicated after 5...Bxf2+. The current main lines all are thought to lead to drawn or equal positions, e.g. after 6.Kxf2 Nxe4+ 7.Kg1, or even 7.Ke3.

White's best try for an advantage is probably 5.Bxf7+ Ke7 6.Bb3 (although 6.Bd5 was the move recommended by **Lawrence Trent** in his recent Fritztrainer DVD),<sup>[5]</sup> as this poses Black the most problems. No grandmasters have regularly adopted the Wilkes-Barre as Black, but **Alexander Beliavsky** and **Alexei Shirov** have played it occasionally even in top competition. No clear refutation is known.

**4...d5 (the main line)** After 4... d5 White has little option but to play 5. exd5, since both the bishop and e4 pawn are attacked. Then Black usually plays 5... Na5 but there are other options:

- The recapture 5...Nxd5?! is extremely risky. **Albert Pinkus** tried to bolster this move with analysis in 1943 and 1944 issues of *Chess Review*, but White gets a strong attack with either the safe **Lolli Variation** 6.d4! or the sacrificial **Fried Liver (or Fegatello) Attack** 6.Nxf7!? Kxf7 7.Qf3+ Ke6 8.Nc3. These variations are usually considered too difficult for Black to defend over the board, but they are sometimes used in correspondence play. Lawrence Trent describes 5...Nxd5 as "a well-known bad move" (or words to that effect).<sup>[5]</sup>
- The **Fritz Variation** 5...Nd4 and **Ulvestad's Variation** 5...b5 are related as they share a common sub-variation. American master Olav Ulvestad introduced 5...b5 in a 1941 article in *Chess Review*. White has only one good reply: 6.Bf1!, protecting g2 so White can answer 6...Qxd5? with 7.Nc3. Both 6.Bxb5 Qxd5 7.Bxc6 Qxc6 and 6.dxc6 bxc4 7.Nc3 are weak. Black's best response is to transpose to the Fritz Variation with 6...Nd4, making another advantage of 6.Bf1 apparent—the bishop is not attacked as it would be if White had played 6.Be2. German master **Alexander Fritz** (1857–1932) suggested 5...Nd4 to **Carl Schlechter**, who wrote about the idea in a 1904

issue of *Deutsche Schachzeitung*. In 1907 Fritz himself wrote an article about his move in the Swedish journal *Tidskrift för Schack*. White's best reply is 6.c3, when the game often continues 6...b5 7.Bf1 Nxd5 8.Ne4 or 8.h4.

#### Main line of Two Knights Defense

After 5...Na5, **Paul Morphy** would play to hold the gambit pawn with 6.d3. The **Morphy Variation** (or **Kieseritzky Attack**) has not been popular, since it has long been known that Black obtains good chances for the pawn with 6...h6 7.Nf3 e4 8.Qe2 Nxc4 9.dxc4 Bc5. (Bronstein once tried the piece sacrifice 8.dxe4!? with success, but its soundness is doubtful.<sup>[2][6]</sup>)

Instead, White usually plays 6.Bb5+, when play almost always continues 6...c6 7.dxc6 bxc6 8.Be2 h6. (The move 8.Qf3?!, popular in the nineteenth century and revived by **Efim Bogoljubov** in the twentieth, is still played occasionally, but Black obtains a strong attack after either 8...h6!, 8...Rb8, or 8...Be7.) White then has a choice of retreats for the knight. The usual move here is 9.Nf3, after which Black obtains some initiative after 9...e4 10.Ne5 Bd6 (the **Knorre Variant** (see diagram) this is considered to be the main line of the Two Knights Defense). 10...Bc5 is a viable alternative for Black, as is 10...Qc7 (the **Goring Variant**).<sup>[7]</sup>

Steinitz favored 9.Nh3 instead, although it did not bring him success in his famous 1891 cable match against Chigorin. The **Steinitz Variation** was mostly forgotten until Fischer revived it in the 1960s. **Nigel Short** led a second revival of 9.Nh3 in the 1990s, and today it is thought to be about equal in strength to the more common 9.Nf3. In addition to the moves 8.Be2 and 8.Qf3, the move 8.Bd3 is a valid alternative that has apparently become fashionable in recent years.<sup>[5]</sup> Also note that after 5...Na5 6.Bb5+, the reply 6...Bd7 by Black is a valid idea that has been explored.<sup>[5]</sup>

#### 4.Nc3

The attempt to defend the pawn with 4.Nc3 does not work well since Black can take the pawn anyway and use a fork trick to regain the piece, 4.Nc3?! Nxe4! 5.Nxe4 d5. The try 5.Bxf7+? does not help, as Black has the bishop pair and a better position after 5...Kxf7 6.Nxe4 d5. Instead, 4.Nc3 is usually played with the intent to gambit the e-pawn with the **Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit**, 4.Nc3 Nxe4 5.0-0. This gambit is not commonly seen in tournament play as it is not well regarded by opening theory, but it can offer White good practical chances, especially in blitz chess.

### 4.d3

The quiet move 4.d3 transposes into the **Giuoco Pianissimo** if Black responds 4...Bc5, but there are also independent variations after 4...Be7 or 4...h6. White tries to avoid the tactical battles that are common in other lines of the Two Knights and to enter a more positional game. The resulting positions take on some characteristics of the **Ruy Lopez** if White plays c3 and retreats the bishop to c2 via Bc4–b3–c2. This move became popular in the 1980s and has been used by **John Nunn** and others. Black can confound White's attempt to avoid tactical play with 4...d5!?. This move is rarely played as opening theory does not approve, but **Jan Piński** suggests that it is better than is commonly believed. In practice after 5. exd5 White still has strong winning chances.<sup>[8]</sup>

### 4.d4

White can choose to develop rapidly with 4.d4 exd4 5.0-0. Now Black can equalize simply by eliminating White's last center pawn with 5...Nxe4, after which White regains the material with 6.Re1 d5 7.Bxd5 Qxd5 8.Nc3 but Black has a comfortable position after 8...Qa5 or 8...Qh5, or obtain good chances with the complex **Max Lange Attack** after 5...Bc5 6.e5 d5. The extensively analyzed Max Lange can also arise from the **Giuoco Piano** or **Scotch Game**. White can choose to avoid these lines by playing 5.e5, a line often adopted by **Sveshnikov**. After 5.e5, either 5...Ne4 or 5...Ng4 is a playable reply, but most common and natural is 5...d5 6.Bb5 Ne4 7.Nxd4 Bc5, with sharp play. The tricky 5.Ng5?! is best met by 5...d5! 6.exd5 Qe7+!

## 3.6.2 COTT

Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit  
Max Lange Attack  
Wilkes-Barre or Traxler Variation

White must respond to the attack on his e-pawn (For explanation of notation, see [chess opening theory table](#)).

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6

### 3.6.3 Notes

- [1] Y.Estrin (1983). *The Two Knight's Defence*. Batsford. ISBN 0-7134-3991-2.
- [2] Bronstein, David (1991) [1973]. *200 Open Games*. Dover. pp. 60–61. ISBN 0-486-26857-8.
- [3] Harding/Botterill (1977), p. 66
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- [5] [http://chessbase-shop.com/en/products/two\\_knight%E2%80%98s\\_defence](http://chessbase-shop.com/en/products/two_knight%E2%80%98s_defence)
- [6] Bronstein–Rojahn, Moscow Olympiad 1956 at [chessgames.com](http://chessgames.com)
- [7] [Chess Openings Viewer](#), C59: Club Aranjuez de Ajedrez
- [8] <http://www.365chess.com/opening.php?m=9&n=2569&ms=e4.e5.Nf3.Nc6.Bc4.Nf6.d3.d5&ns=3.5.5.6.80.412.249.2569>

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- Tait, Jonathan (2004). *The Two Knights Defence*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1857442830.

## 3.6.6 External links

- Harding, Tim (March 2001). *The Kibitzer: Two Knights Defence, Part 1* (PDF). Chesscafe.com.
- Harding, Tim (April 2001). *The Kibitzer: Two Knights Defence, Part 2* (PDF). Chesscafe.com.
- Harding, Tim (May 2001). *The Kibitzer: Two Knights Defence, Part 3* (PDF). Chesscafe.com.

### 3.7 Fried Liver Attack

The **Fried Liver Attack**, also called the **Fegatello Attack** (named after an Italian idiom meaning “dead as a piece of liver”), is a chess opening. This colourfully named opening is a variation of the **Two Knights Defense** in which White sacrifices a knight for an attack on Black’s king. The opening begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Nf6
4. Ng5 d5
5. exd5 Nxd5?!

This is the **Two Knights Defense** where White has chosen the offensive line 4.Ng5, but Black’s last move is risky (other Black choices include 5...Na5, 5...b5, and 5...Nd4). White can now get an advantage with 6.d4 (the **Lolli Attack**). However, The Fried Liver Attack involves a far more spectacular knight sacrifice on f7, defined by the moves:

6. Nxf7 Kxf7

The Fried Liver Attack has been known for many centuries, the earliest known example being a game <sup>[1]</sup> played by **Giulio Cesare Polerio** before 1606.<sup>[2]</sup>

The opening is classified as code C57 in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) .

#### 3.7.1 Considerations

Position after 8.Nc3

Play usually continues 7.Qf3+ Ke6 (not 7...Kg8?? 8.Bxd5+ with checkmate) 8.Nc3 (see diagram). Black will play 8...Nb4 or 8...Ne7 and follow up with ...c6, bolstering his pinned knight on d5. (If Black does play 8...Nb4, White can force the b4 knight to abandon protection of the d5 knight with the rather dubious 9.a3 Nc2+ 10.Kf1 Nxa1, although this involves giving up a further rook.) White has a strong attack, but it has not been proven yet to be decisive.

Because defence is harder to play than attack in this variation when given short time limits, the Fried Liver is dangerous for Black in over-the-board play, if using a short time control. It is also especially effective against weaker players who may not be able to find the correct defences. Sometimes Black invites White to play the Fried Liver Attack in correspondence chess or in over-the-board games with longer time limits (or no time limit), as the relaxed pace

affords Black a better opportunity to refute the White sacrifice.

#### 3.7.2 References

- [1] Polerio v Domenico, Rome 1610
- [2] Polerio-Giovanni Domenico d'Arminio must have been played before 1606 (Polerio’s last sign of life, see: Peter Monté “The Classical Era of Modern Chess” (McFarland 2014), page 273)

#### 3.7.3 Further reading

- *Computer Analysis of the Fried Liver and Lolli*, Dan Heisman, Chessbase CHNESO001U
- *Re-Fried Liver*, by Jon Edwards, Chess Life, July 2009, pp. 32–34.

#### 3.7.4 External links

- The Fried Liver Attack blog by GM Boris Alterman
- Fried Liver Attack The Chess Website by Kevin Butler

### 3.8 Giuoco Piano

The **Giuoco Piano** (Italian: “Quiet Game”; pronounced [dʒwoːko ˈpjaːno]) is a chess opening beginning with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Bc5

White’s “Italian bishop” at c4 prevents Black from advancing in the center with ...d5 and attacks the vulnerable f7-square. White plans to dominate the center with d2–d4 and to attack the black king. Black aims to free his game by exchanging pieces and playing the pawn break ...d5, or to hold his center pawn at e5.

Common alternatives to 3...Bc5 include 3...Nf6 (the **Two Knights Defense**) and 3...Be7 (the **Hungarian Defense**). Much less common are 3...d6 (the **Semi-Italian Opening**), 3...g6, 3...Nd4 (the **Blackburne Shilling Gambit**), and 3...f5.

### 3.8.1 History

The Giuoco Piano is the oldest recorded opening. The **Portuguese Damiano** played it at the beginning of the 16th century and the **Italian Greco** played it at the beginning of the 17th century. The opening is also known as the **Italian Game** (Pinski 2005:5), although that name is also used to describe all games starting with 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4, regardless of Black’s third move (Gufeld & Stetsko 1996:5). The Giuoco Piano was popular through the 19th century, but modern refinements in defensive play have led most chess masters towards openings like the **Ruy Lopez** that offer White greater chances for long term initiative.

In modern play, grandmasters have shown distinct preference for the slower and more strategic Giuoco Pianissimo (4.d3). Anatoli Karpov used the Giuoco Pianissimo against Viktor Korchnoi twice in the 1981 World Championship tournament, with both games ending in a draw;<sup>[1][2]</sup> Garry Kasparov used it against Joël Lautier at Linares 1994, resigning after 26 moves;<sup>[3]</sup> Vladimir Kramnik chose it against Teimour Radjabov at Linares (2004);<sup>[4]</sup> Viswanathan Anand used it to defeat Jon Hammer in 2010;<sup>[5]</sup> and Magnus Carlsen used it against Hikaru Nakamura at London 2011, winning in 41 moves.<sup>[6]</sup>

### 3.8.2 Variations

The main continuations on White’s fourth move are:

- 4.c3 (the **Greco Variation**), see below.
- 4.d3 (the **Giuoco Pianissimo**, Italian: “Very Quiet Game”), see below.
- 4.b4 (the **Evans Gambit**), in which White offers a pawn to speed his development. This opening was popular in the 19th century, more than the standard Giuoco Piano.
- 4.d4 (the **Italian Gambit**), in which White opens up the center avoiding the quiet lines of the Giuoco Piano and Giuoco Pianissimo.
- 4.0-0, often with the intention of meeting 4...Nf6 with 5.d4, the **Max Lange Gambit**, with similar ideas to the Italian Gambit but with some transpositional differences.
- 4.Bxf7+? Kxf7 5.Nxe5+ Nxe5 (the **Jerome Gambit**), an unsound opening where White sacrifices two pieces in the hope of exposing Black’s king and obtaining a mating attack.
- 4.Nc3 (the **Four Knights Variation**).

#### Main line: 4.c3

In the main line (**Greco Variation**) White plays 4.c3 in preparation for the central advance d2–d4. Black can try to hold a strong point in the center at e5 with 4...Qe7 or he can counterattack with 4...Nf6. The center-holding line can continue 4...Qe7 5.d4 Bb6 6.0-0 d6 7.a4 a6 8.h3 Nf6 9.Re1 0-0.

The more aggressive 4...Nf6 was first analyzed by Greco in the 17th century. In the **Greco Attack** White uses a major piece sacrifice to create a trap. Play continues:

#### 4. c3 Nf6 5. d4 exd4 6. cxd4

Main line (Greco Attack)

Position after 7...Nxe4

White can also try 6.e5, a line favoured by Evgeny Sveshnikov,<sup>[7]</sup> when play usually continues 6...d5 7.Bb5 Ne4 8.cxd4 Bb6, with approximate equality. Instead, White has a gambit alternative in 6.0-0, which **Graham Burgess** revived in the book *101 Chess Opening Surprises*; the critical line runs 6...Nxe4 7.cxd4 d5 8.dxc5 dxc4 9.Qe2. The other alternative 6.b4 is refuted by the strong piece sacrifice 6...Bb6 7.e5 d5 8.exf6 dxc4 9.b5 0-0! according to **Jeremy Silman**.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### 6... Bb4+ 7. Nc3 Nxe4 (see diagram)

Greco encouraged an attack on White’s a1-rook with 8.0-0, allowing 8...Nxc3!? (9.bxc3 Bxc3? 10.Qb3. Now if Black takes the rook with 10...Bxa1, White wins the black queen with 11.Bxf7+ Kf8 12.Bg5 Ne7 13.Re1. This trap is now well-known, and Black can avoid it by playing 10...d5, or earlier, 8...Bxc3.) After 8...Nxc3 9.bxc3, best for Black is 9...d5! 10.cxb4 dxc4 11.Re1+ Ne7 12.Qa4+! Bd7 13.b5 0-0 14.Qxc4 Ng6!

In 1898 the **Møller Attack** revived this line; Danish player Jørgen Møller published analysis of the line in *Tidsskrift for Skak* (1898). In the Møller Attack White sacrifices a pawn for development and the initiative:

#### 8. 0-0 Bxc3! 9. d5

9.bxc3 and 9.Qc2 are both fine alternatives.

#### 9... Bf6

9...Ne5 is also interesting; a possible continuation is 10.bxc3 Nxc4 11.Qd4 f5 12.Qxc4 d6.

#### 10. Re1 Ne7 11. Rxe4 d6 12. Bg5 Bxg5 13. Nxc5 h6!?

13...0-0 14.Nxh7! is considered to lead to a draw with best play, although Black has many opportunities to go wrong.

#### 14. Bb5+

After 14.Qe2 hxg5 15.Re1 Be6! 16.dxe6 (White also can try 16.Qd2 c6! 17.dxe6 f6 18.Bd3 d5 19.Rg4 Qc7 20.h3 0-0-0 21.b4, attacking) 16...f6 17.Re3 c6 18.Rh3 Rxh3 19.gxh3 g6 it is doubtful that White has compensation for the sacrificed pawn, according to **Grandmaster Larry Kaufman**; 14.Qh5 0-0 15.Rae1 Ng6! also favors Black.

#### 14... Bd7 15. Qe2 Bxb5 16. Qxb5+ Qd7 17. Qxb7

17.Qe2 Kf8 wins a second pawn.

#### 17... 0-0

and Black is at least equal.

If White does not want to **sacrifice** material, instead of 7.Nc3 he can play **7. Bd2**, which can continue **7... Bxd2+** (Kaufman recommends 7...Nxe4!? 8.Bxb4 Nxb4 9.Bxf7+ Kxf7 10.Qb3+ d5!? [10...Kf8 11.Qxb4+ Qe7 12.Qxe7+ Kxe7 is safer, reaching an equal **endgame**] 11.Ne5+ Ke6! 12.Qxb4 c5!?) **8. Nbxg2 d5 9. exd5 Nxd5 10. Qb3 Nce7** (10...Na5 is an alternative, inviting a repetition of moves after 11.Qa4+ Nc6 [threatening 12...Nb6] 12.Qb3 Na5) **11. 0-0 0-0 12. Rfe1 c6**. In this position White has more freedom, but his **isolated** d-pawn can be a weakness. Note: **7.Nd2** is also a viable choice of move for White, although this still only offers approximate equality. It has not been a popular choice among human players, but it seems to be recommended by computer engines.<sup>[9]</sup>

Giuoco Pianissimo  
4.d3

#### Giuoco Pianissimo: 4.d3

With 4.d3, White plays the **Giuoco Pianissimo** (Italian: “Very Quiet Game”). White aims for a slow buildup deferring d2–d4 until it can be prepared. By avoiding an immediate confrontation in the center White prevents the early

release of tension through exchanges and enters a positional maneuvering game. If White plays c2–c3, the position can take some characteristics of the **Ruy Lopez** if his bishop retreats to c2 via Bc4–b3–c2. Despite its slow, **drawish** reputation, this variation became more popular after being taken up by **John Nunn** in the 1980s. The common move orders are 4.c3 Nf6 5.d3, and the transposition via the **Bishop’s Opening**: 2.Bc4 Nf6 3.d3 Nc6 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.c3.

### 3.8.3 ECO codes

Codes from the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* are:

- C50 **Italian Game**, includes Giuoco Piano lines other than 4.c3 and 4.b4
- C51 **Evans Gambit**
- C52 Evans Gambit, with 4...Bxb4 5.c3 Ba5
- C53 Giuoco Piano, 4.c3:
  - without 4...Nf6
  - with 4...Nf6 but without 5.d4
  - with 4...Nf6 5.d4 exd4 but without 6.cxd4
- C54 Giuoco Piano, 4.c3, with 4...Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4

### 3.8.4 References

- [1] Karpov vs Korchnoi, World Ch. Rematch (1981)
- [2] Karpov vs Korchnoi, World Ch. Rematch (1981)
- [3] Kasparov vs Lautier, Linares (1994)
- [4] Kramnik vs Radjabov, Linares (2004)
- [5] Anand vs Hammer, Arctic Securities Chess Stars (2010)
- [6] Carlsen vs Nakamura, London (2011)
- [7] The Steinitz-Sveshnikov Attack
- [8] Giuoco Piano - A nice piece sacrifice
- [9] World Computer Chess Championship 2011

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- Gufeld, Eduard; Stetsko, Oleg (1996), *The Giuoco Piano*, Batsford, ISBN 978-0-7134-7802-0
- Harding, Tim; Botterill, G. S. (1977). *The Italian Game*. B. T. Batsford Ltd. ISBN 0-7134-3261-6.

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Kaufman, Larry (2004). *The Chess Advantage in Black and White*. McKay Chess Library. ISBN 0-8129-3571-3.
- Pinski, Jan (2005), *Italian Game and Evans Gambit*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 978-1-85744-373-8

## 3.9 Evans Gambit

The **Evans Gambit** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Bc5
4. b4

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* has two codes for the Evans Gambit, C51 and C52.

- C51: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4
- C52: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4 Bxb4 5.c3 Ba5

### 3.9.1 History

The gambit is named after the Welsh sea Captain **William Davies Evans**, the first player known to have employed it. The first game with the opening is considered to be Evans–McDonnell, London 1827, although in that game a slightly different move order was tried (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.0-0 d6 and only now 5.b4). In 1832, the first analysis of the gambit was published in the *Second Series of Progressive Lessons (1832)* by **William Lewis**.<sup>[1]</sup> The gambit became very popular shortly after that, being employed a number of times in the series of games between McDonnell and Louis de la Bourdonnais in 1834. Players such as **Adolf Anderssen**, **Paul Morphy** and **Mikhail Chigorin** subsequently took it up. After **Emanuel Lasker's** simplifying defense to the opening in a tournament in 1895, it was out of favour for much of the 20th century, although **John Nunn** and **Jan Timman** played some games with it in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and in the 1990s **Garry Kasparov** used it in a few of his games (notably a famous 25-move win against **Viswanathan Anand** in Riga, 1995), which prompted a brief revival of interest in it.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 3.9.2 General remarks

The Evans Gambit is an aggressive variant of the **Giuoco Piano**, which normally continues with the positional moves 4.c3 or 4.d3. The idea behind the move 4.b4 is to give up a pawn in order to secure a strong centre and bear down on Black's weak-point, f7. Ideas based on Ba3, preventing Black from **castling**, are also often in the air. According to **Reuben Fine**, the Evans Gambit poses a challenge for Black since the usual defenses (play ...d6 and/or give back the gambit pawn) are more difficult to pull off than with other gambits. (Interestingly, Fine was beaten by this gambit in a friendly game against **Bobby Fischer**, in just 17 moves: **Fischer–Fine 1963 1–0**.)

The famous **Evergreen** game opened with the Evans Gambit.

#### Accepted

The most obvious and most usual way for Black to meet the gambit is to accept it with 4...Bxb4, after which White plays 5.c3 and Black usually follows up with 5...Ba5 (5...Be7 and, less often 5...Bc5 and 5...Bd6, the Stone Ware Variation, are also played). White usually follows up with 6.d4. **Emanuel Lasker's** line is 4...Bxb4 5.c3 Ba5 6.d4 d6 7.0-0 Bb6 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.Qxd8+ Nxd8 10.Nxe5 Be6. This variation takes the sting out of White's attack by returning the gambit pawn and exchanging queens, and according to Fine, the resulting simplified position "is psychologically depressing for the gambit player" whose intent is usually an aggressive attack. Chigorin did a lot of analysis on the alternative 9.Qb3 Qf6 10.Bg5 Qg6 11.Bd5 Nge7 12.Bxe7 Kxe7 13.Bxc6 Qxc6 14.Nxe5 Qe6, which avoids the exchange of queens, but reached no clear verdict. Instead White often avoids this line with 7.Qb3 Qd7 8.dxe5, when Black can return the pawn with 8...Bb6 or hold onto it with 8...dxe5, though White obtains sufficient compensation in this line.

Alternatively Black can meet 6.d4 with 6...exd4, when White can try 7.Qb3, a move often favoured by **Nigel Short**. 7.0-0 is traditionally met by 7...Nge7 intending to meet 8.Ng5 or 8.cxd4 with 8...d5, returning the pawn in many lines, rather than the materialistic 7...dxc3 which is well met by 8.Qb3 with a very dangerous initiative for the sacrificed pawns. Alternatively 7...d6 8.cxd4 Bb6 is known as the **Normal Position**, in which Black is content to settle for a one-pawn advantage and White seeks compensation in the form of open lines and a strong centre.

#### Declined

Alternatively the gambit can be declined with 4...Bb6, when 5.a4 a6 is the normal continuation. But due to the loss of

tempo involved, most commentators consider declining the Evans Gambit to be weaker than accepting it, then giving up the pawn at a later stage. Also, Black can play the rare Countergambit Variation (4...d5), but this is thought to be rather dubious.

However, in the book *My System*, Aron Nimzowitsch states that by declining the gambit Black has not lost a tempo, since the move b4 was, in the sense of development, unproductive, “as is every pawn move, if it does not bear a logical connection with the centre. For suppose after 4...Bb6 5.b5 (to make a virtue of necessity and attempt something of a demobilizing effect with the ill-moved b-pawn move), 5...Nd4 and now if 6.Nxe5, then 6...Qg5 with a strong attack.”<sup>[3]</sup>

### 3.9.3 Bishop retreats after accepting the gambit

After 4.b4 Bxb4 5.c3, the Bishop must move or be captured. The common retreats are listed here, with the good and bad sides of each:

#### 5...Ba5

According to [Chessgames.com](http://Chessgames.com), this is Black’s most popular retreat. It gets out of the way of White’s centre pawns, and pins the c3 pawn if White plays 6.d4, but it has the disadvantage of removing the a5-square for the black queen’s knight. Black usually subsequently retreats the bishop to b6 to facilitate ...Na5, which is particularly strong when White opts for the Bc4, Qb3 approach.

#### 5...Bc5

According to [Chessgames.com](http://Chessgames.com), this is the second most popular retreat, with White scoring better than after 5...Ba5. This is often played by people unfamiliar with the Evans Gambit, but is arguably not as good as 5...Ba5, because 6.d4 attacks the bishop and narrows down Black’s options as compared with 5...Ba5 6.d4.

#### 5...Be7

This has often been considered one of the “safer” retreats, and has been played by Viswanathan Anand. After 6.d4 Na5, White can attempt to maintain an initiative with 7.Be2 as played by Kasparov, or immediately recapture the pawn with 7.Nxe5.

#### 5...Bd6

This is called the **Stone–Ware Defense** after Henry Nathan Stone and Preston Ware. The move reinforces the e5-pawn and has been played by several grandmasters such as Andrei Volokitin, Alexander Grischuk and Loek van Wely.

#### 5...Bf8

This is called the **Mayet Defense** and is played very rarely.

### 3.9.4 References in Popular Culutre

In *The West Wing* episode “Hartsfield’s Landing,” President Bartlet references the Evan’s Gambit while playing chess with Toby Ziegler.

BARTLET: Taiwan’s not gonna be our topic. Ah, the Evans Gambit!

TOBY: There’s no such thing as the Evans Gambit.

BARTLET: A variation of the Giuoco Piano opening, named after a British sea captain, W.D. Evans, who invented it in 1820 - don’t tell me chess moves.

TOBY: I moved my pawn.

BARTLET: Well, it’s as popular today as it was back then.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 3.9.5 See also

- [List of chess openings](#)
- [List of chess openings named after people](#)

### 3.9.6 Notes

- [1] The British chess magazine, vol. 26 (1906) page 51.
- [2] “Garry Kasparov vs Viswanathan Anand”. [chessgames.com](http://chessgames.com).
- [3] Aron Nimzowitsch, *My System: Winning Chess Strategies*, Snowball Publishing, 2012, p. 11.
- [4] <http://www.westwingtranscripts.com/search.php?flag=getTranscript&id=59>

### 3.9.7 References

- Harding, Tim and Bernard Cafferty (1997). *Play the Evans Gambit*. Cadogan. ISBN 1-85744-119-2.
- [ChessCafe.com article about the Evans Gambit \(PDF\)](#)

- Handbuch des Schachspiels
- Fine, Reuben (1990). *Ideas Behind the Chess Openings*. Random House. ISBN 0-8129-1756-1.
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- Yvinec, Jean-Marc (2012). *Mon Gambit Evans*. auto-édition. ISBN 979-10-91279-00-0.

### 3.9.8 External links

- Evans Gambit video and analysis
- Overview of Evans Gambit
- Chessbase stats
- Kibitzer article, part one (PDF file)
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4 (5174 games)
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4 d5 (33 games)
- Fischer–Fine 1963 1–0
- “The Evans Gambit” by Edward Winter

## 3.10 Italian Gambit

The **Italian Gambit** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Bc5
4. d4

It is often played as an alternative to the quiet and closed lines of the Giuoco Piano or Giuoco Pianissimo openings. Black can:

- take with the pawn (4...exd4, a transposition to the Scotch Gambit, usually leading to the Max Lange Attack);
- take with the knight (4...Nxd4), which is considered weak since it allows the strong 5.Nxe5, attacking f7 with the bishop and knight; or
- take with the bishop (4...Bxd4), which is considered best.

### 3.10.1 4...Bxd4

After 4... Bxd4 5. Nxd4 Nxd4, George Koltanowski favoured 6.0-0, which transposes to the related gambit line 4.0-0 Nf6 5.d4 following 6...Nf6, when 7.f4 and 7.Bg5 are the main possibilities for White. However, 6...d6!? is an independent alternative for Black.

White can also deviate with 6.Be3, which was dubbed the Miami Variation by Jude Acers and George Laven, and which probably suffices for dynamic equality.

The other alternative 6.f4?! is considered dubious due to 6...d5.

### 3.10.2 See also

- Italian Game
- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 3.10.3 References

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Acers, Jude and Laven, George (2003). *The Italian Gambit (and) A Guiding Repertoire for White–1.e4!*. Trafford Publishing. ISBN 1-55369-604-2.

## 3.11 Irish Gambit

Irish Gambit after 4.d4

The **Irish Gambit**, **Chicago Gambit**, or **Razzle Dazzle Gambit**, is a weak chess opening that begins:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Nxe5?

intending 3...Nxe5 4.d4 (see diagram).

### 3.11.1 Discussion

White’s pawns occupy the center, but the sacrifice of a knight for a pawn is a very high price to pay. The gambit is

accordingly considered unsound, and is never seen in high-level play. It is often referred to as the Chicago Gambit, perhaps because **Harold Meyer Phillips**, remarkably, used it in an 1899 game in a simultaneous exhibition in Chicago to beat **Harry Nelson Pillsbury**, one of the strongest players in the world at the time.<sup>[1]</sup>

An apocryphal tale is told of the anonymous inventor of the gambit. On his deathbed, when asked what subtle idea lay behind the gambit, his last words were reportedly: “I hadn’t seen the king’s pawn was defended.”<sup>[2]</sup>

A similar line is the **Halloween Gambit**, 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nxe5?!. It is also considered dubious, but is sounder than the Irish Gambit, because White can gain time by chasing both of Black’s knights while occupying the center. White has won a number of short games with the Halloween Gambit.

### 3.11.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 3.11.3 References

- [1] *Harold Meyer Phillips vs Harry Nelson Pillsbury, Chicago 1899*, Chessgames.com, retrieved 2006-11-18
- [2] Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1996), “Irish Gambit”, *The Oxford Companion To Chess* (2 ed.), Oxford University, p. 182, ISBN 0-19-280049-3

### 3.11.4 External links

- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nxe5 (13 games)

## 3.12 Jerome Gambit

The **Jerome Gambit** is an unsound chess opening which is an offshoot of the **Giuoco Piano**. It is characterized by the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Bc5
- (The Giuoco Piano.)
4. Bxf7+? Kxf7
5. Nxe5+ Nxe5

White sacrifices two pieces in hopes of exposing Black’s king and obtaining a mating attack. The line is virtually never seen today (and never seen in high-level chess), but was known in the late 19th century. **Blackburne** wrote of it, “I used to call this the Kentucky opening. For a while after its introduction, it was greatly favoured by certain players, but they soon grew tired of it.”<sup>[1]</sup>

### 3.12.1 Discussion

In the third edition of the opening treatise *Chess Openings, Ancient and Modern* (1896), the authors wrote:

The Jerome Gambit is an **American** invention, and a very risky attack. It is described in the American Supplement to *Cook’s Synopsis* as unsound but not to be trifled with. The first player sacrifices two pieces for two pawns, with the chances arising from the adversary’s king being displaced, and drawn into the centre of the board.<sup>[2]</sup>

Similarly, **du Mont** wrote that it “is unsound, but has the saving grace of leading to a lively game and is therefore suitable for an occasional friendly game. The defender cannot afford to be careless.”<sup>[3]</sup>

White may regain one of the two sacrificed pieces with 6.d4, but Black retains a decisive material advantage with 6...Bxd4 7.Qxd4 Qf6.<sup>[4]</sup> More commonly, White plays 6.Qh5+. In that event, Freeborough and Ranken analyzed two lines. One is 6...Kf8 7.Qxe5 Qe7 8.Qf5+ Ke8 9.Nc3 d6 10.Qf3 Qf7 11.Qe2 Nh6 12.0-0 c6, with large advantage to Black.<sup>[4]</sup> Freeborough and Ranken also analyze the bold 6.Qh5+ Ke6!? (“follow[ing] out Mr. Steinitz’s theory that the King is a strong piece”) 7.Qf5+ Kd6 8.d4 (or 8.f4 Qf6 9.fxe5+ Qxe5) Bxd4 9.Na3 c6 10.c3 Qf6 11.cxd4 Qxf5 12.exf5 Nf7 13.Bf4+ Ke7, again with a large advantage.<sup>[4]</sup> A bad line for Black after 6.Qh5+ is 6... Kf6?? 7. Qf5+ Ke7 8. Qxe5+ Kf7 9. Qxc5, regaining both pieces and winning two pawns.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 3.12.2 Illustrative game

N.N. vs. Blackburne  
Position after 12.Kh1

N.N. versus Blackburne, England 1880<sup>[6]</sup>

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. Bxf7+? Kxf7 5. Nxe5+ Nxe5 6. Qh5+ g6 Seirawan and Minev observe that after 6...Kf8 7.Qxe5 d6 or 6...Ng6 7.Qxc5 d6 White has insufficient compensation for the sacrificed piece, but

Blackburne likes to attack.<sup>[7]</sup> 7. Qxe5 d6? Blackburne remarks, “Not to be outdone in generosity.”,<sup>[1]</sup> however after 7...Qe7! White cannot safely take the rook. 8. Qxh8 Qh4 9. 0-0 Nf6 10. c3? Better is 10.Qd8!<sup>[7]</sup> 10... Ng4 11. h3 Bxf2+ 12. Kh1 (see diagram) 12... Bf5! 13. Qxa8 Qxh3+! 14. gxh3 Bxe4#. Having accepted White’s sacrifice of two minor pieces, Blackburne responded by returning the knight, then sacrificing both rooks and his queen to deliver **checkmate** with his three remaining minor pieces.

### 3.12.3 References

- [1] Joseph Henry Blackburne, *Mr. Blackburne’s Games at Chess, selected, annotated and arranged by himself*
- [2] E. Freeborough and Rev. C. E. Ranken, *Chess Openings, Ancient and Modern*, Third Edition, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., London, 1896, p. 85.
- [3] J. du Mont, *200 Miniature Games of Chess*, David McKay, 1965, p. 147.
- [4] Freeborough and Ranken, p. 86.
- [5] Larry Evans, *Chess Catechism*, 1970, ISBN 0-671-20491-2
- [6] N.N.–Blackburne, England 1880
- [7] Yasser Seirawan and Nikolay Minev, *Take My Rooks*, International Chess Enterprises, 1991, p. 66. ISBN 1-879479-01-X.

### 3.12.4 External links

- Rick Kennedy. “Jerome Gambit theory and practice”.
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.Bxf7+ (3 games)

## 3.13 Blackburne Shilling Gambit

The **Blackburne Shilling Gambit** is the name facetiously given to a dubious chess opening, derived from an offshoot of the **Italian Game**, that begins:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Nd4?!

It is also sometimes referred to as the **Kostić Gambit** after the Serbian grandmaster **Borislav Kostić**, who played it in the early 20th century.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 3.13.1 History

**Wilhelm Steinitz** made the first known mention of this line, noting it in 1895 in the Addenda to his *Modern Chess Instructor*, Part II.<sup>[2]</sup> The earliest game with the opening on [chessgames.com](http://chessgames.com), Dunlop–Hicks, **New Zealand Championship**, dates from 1911.<sup>[3]</sup> Another early game, mentioned by Bill Wall, is Muhlock–Kostić, **Cologne**, 1912.<sup>[1][4]</sup>

### 3.13.2 Analysis

Black’s third move is, objectively speaking, a weak, time-wasting move. Steinitz recommended 4.0-0 or 4.Nxd4 in response.<sup>[2]</sup> **International Master Jeremy Silman** writes that White has an advantage after 4.0-0, 4.c3, or 4.Nc3. He recommends as best 4.Nxd4! exd4 5.c3 d5 6.exd5 Qe7+ 7.Kf1 +/-, when 5...Bc5? loses a pawn to 6.Bxf7+! Kxf7 7.Qh5+.<sup>[5]</sup>

The only virtue of 3...Nd4 is that it sets a trap that has ensnared many players. After the natural 4.Nxe5!?, Black wins material with 4...Qg5! Now the obvious 5.Nxf7?? loses to 5...Qxg2 6.Rf1 Qxe4+ 7.Be2 Nf3#, a **smothered mate**. This trap is what gives the line its name; the great English master **Joseph Henry Blackburne** reputedly used it to win **shillings** from amateurs.<sup>[1]</sup> However, Wall has questioned this, stating that there are no recorded games of Blackburne with the opening.<sup>[1]</sup>

The opening is not a true **gambit**, since White cannot take the **pawn** on e5 without losing material. However, after 4.Nxe5 Qg5, White can maintain a playable game with 5.Bxf7+! Steinitz wrote that this move, “followed by **castling**, is now White’s best chance and in some measure a promising one, considering that he has two Pawns and the attack for the piece”.<sup>[2]</sup> After 5...Ke7? (5...Kd8!? 6.0-0 [6.Ng4? Nh6!–+] +/-) 6.0-0 Qxe5 7.Bxg8 (7.Bc4 is also possible) Rxg8 8.c3 Nc6 (8...Ne6 9.d4! Qxe4? 10.d5 Nf4?? 11.Re1 pins Black’s **queen** against his **king** and wins; Silman analyzes 9...Qf6 10.f4 when “[w]ith two pawns and an attack for the sacrificed piece, White’s compensation isn’t in doubt”.<sup>[5]</sup>) 9.d4, White’s two extra pawns, strong center, and lead in development, combined with Black’s awkwardly placed king, give White strong compensation for the sacrificed knight. G. Chandler–NN, Stockbridge 1983, concluded 9...Qa5? (9...Qf6 10.e5 Qf7 may be best) 10.d5 Ne5? 11.Qh5! Nf7? (11...d6 12.Bg5+ Kd7 13.Qxh7 also wins for White) 12.d6+! 1–0 (in light of 13.Qxa5).

**Graham Burgess** writes that 3...Nd4 is also known as the “Oh my God!” trap, as for full effect, Black is supposed to make this exclamation, pretending to have accidentally blundered the e-pawn. Burgess condemns this behavior as unethical, and notes that the trap, if avoided, leaves White with a large advantage.<sup>[6]</sup>

### 3.13.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 3.13.4 References

- [1] Bill Wall (2005), *The Blackburne Shilling Gambit*
- [2] Wilhelm Steinitz, *The Modern Chess Instructor*, Edition Olms Zürich, 1990 (reprint), p. 63 of Part II. ISBN 3-283-00111-1.
- [3] Dunlop–Hicks, New Zealand Championship 1911.
- [4] Muhlock–Kostić, Köln 1912
- [5] Jeremy Silman (2004), *Two Wild Black Systems*
- [6] Graham Burgess, *The Mammoth Book of Chess*, Carroll & Graf, 1997, pp. 122–23. ISBN 0-7867-0725-9.

### 3.13.5 External links

- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nd4 (635 games)

## 3.14 Scotch Game

The **Scotch Game**, or **Scotch Opening**, is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. d4

Ercole del Rio, in his 1750 treatise *Sopra il giuoco degli Scacchi, Osservazioni pratiche d'anonimo Autore Modenese* (“On the game of Chess, practical Observations by an anonymous Modenese Author”), was the first author to mention what is now called the Scotch Game.<sup>[1]</sup> The opening received its name from a correspondence match in 1824 between Edinburgh and London. Popular in the 19th century, by 1900 the Scotch had lost favour among top players because it was thought to release the central tension too early and allow Black to equalise without difficulty. More recently, grandmasters Garry Kasparov and Jan Timman helped to re-popularize the Scotch when they used it as a surprise weapon to avoid the well-analysed Ruy Lopez.

### 3.14.1 Analysis

White aims to dominate the centre by exchanging his d-pawn for Black's e-pawn. Black usually plays 3...exd4, as he has no good way to maintain his pawn on e5 (this same position can be reached by transposition from the Centre Game 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.Nf3 Nc6). After 3...d6, White is better after 4.dxe5 dxe5 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 6.Bc4, or he may simply play 4.Bb5, when 4...exd4 5.Nxd4 Bd7 transposes to the Steinitz Defense in the Ruy Lopez.

3...Nxd4 is possible, though rarely played today by strong players. It was popular in the 19th century, and receives five columns of analysis in Freeborough and Ranken's opening manual *Chess Openings Ancient and Modern* (3rd ed. 1896 p. 53). It is often described today as a strategic error, since after 4.Nxd4 exd4 5.Qxd4 (5.Bc4 is the **Napoleon Gambit**) White's queen stands on a central square, and is *not* developed too early since it cannot be chased away very effectively (5...c5? is a seriously weakening move that blocks Black's king's bishop). Nonetheless, the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (volume 3, 3rd edition 1997, p. 251 n.28, referring to p. 252 line 1) concludes that Black equalises with 5...Ne7 6.Bc4 Nc6 7.Qd5 Qf6 8.0-0 Ne5 9.Be2 c6 10.Qb3 Ng6 11.f4 Bc5+ 12.Kh1 d6. Similarly, Harald Keilhack concludes in *Knight on the Left: 1.Nc3* (p. 21) that although ...Nxd4 is a “non-line” these days, if Black continues perfectly it is not clear that White gets even a small advantage. Keilhack analyses 5.Qxd4 d6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.Bc4 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Bg5 c6 10.a4 Qa5 11.Bh4 and now after 11...Qe5 or 11...Be6, “White has at most this indescribable nothingness which is the advantage of the first move.” (*Id.* p. 25) The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* also concludes that Black equalises after the alternative 4.Nxe5 Ne6 5.Bc4 Nf6 6.Nc3 Be7 7.0-0 0-0 8.Be3 d6 8.Nd3 Nxe4 10.Nxe4 d5 (p. 251 n.28).

After the usual 3...exd4, White can respond with the main line 4.Nxd4 or can play a **gambit** by offering Black one or two pawns in exchange for rapid development.

### 3.14.2 Main variations

After 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4, the most important continuations are:

- 4.Nxd4 (Main line)
  - 4...Bc5 (Classical Variation)
  - 4...Nf6 (Schmidt Variation)
  - 4...Qh4!? (Steinitz Variation)
  - 4...Qf6
  - 4...Nxd4?!

- 4...Bb4+?!
- 4.Bc4 (Scotch Gambit)
- 4.c3 (Göring Gambit)
- 4.Bb5

### Main line: 4.Nxd4

Main line (4.Nxd4)

In the main line after 4.Nxd4, Black has two major options. Either 4...Bc5 or 4...Nf6 offers Black good chances for an equal game.

**Classical Variation: 4...Bc5** Main article: [Scotch Game, Classical Variation](#)

After 4...Bc5 White has 5.Nxc6, 5.Be3, or 5.Nb3. After 5.Nxc6 play almost always continues 5...Qf6 (Black does not lose a piece on c6 because he is threatening mate with 6...Qxf2) 6.Qd2 dxc6 7.Nc3. On 5.Be3 play almost always continues 5...Qf6 6.c3 Nge7 7.Bc4 (as proposed by **IM Gary Lane** in *Winning with the Scotch*) {many seventh move alternatives for white are possible here. 7.g3 for example} 0-0 {7...Ne5 is more often played than castles after 7.Bc4. Play usually continues 8.Be2 Qg6 (although 8...d5 is also possible) 9.0-0 Here, black has the option of taking the unprotected pawn on e4 but it is considered "poisoned"}<sup>[2]</sup> 8.0-0 Bb6 where the position is roughly equal. On 5.Nb3 play almost always continues 5...Bb6 6.a4 a6 7.Nc3. Another plan for White is to play 6.Nc3, followed by (in some order) Qe2, Be3, h4 and castling long.

**Schmidt Variation: 4...Nf6** After 4...Nf6 White has 5.Nxc6 (the **Mieses Variation**) or 5.Nc3 (the **Scotch Four Knights Game**). After 5.Nc3 almost always played is 5...Bb4 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.Bd3 d5 8.exd5 cxd5 9.0-0 0-0 10.Bg5 c6. After 5.Nxc6 bxc6 6.e5 Qe7 7.Qe2 Nd5 8.c4 is also very common. Where these main lines end, the first real opening decisions are made, which are too specific for this survey.

**Steinitz Variation: 4...Qh4!?** **Steinitz's** 4...Qh4!? almost wins a pawn by force, but White gets a lead in development and attacking chances as compensation. As of 2005, White's most successful line has been 5.Nc3 Bb4 6.Be2 Qxe4 7.Nb5 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 Kd8 9.0-0, when Black's awkwardly placed king has generally proven more significant than his extra pawn.

### Scotch Gambit: 4.Bc4

Scotch Gambit (4.Bc4)

Instead of 4.Nxd4, White has two ways to offer a gambit. The **Scotch Gambit** (which is the line recommended by **GM Lev Alburt** in his book *Chess Openings for White, Explained*) starts with 4.Bc4. Black can transpose into the **Two Knights Defense** with 4...Nf6 or he can continue the Scotch with 4...Bc5 5.c3 and now 5...Nf6 will transpose into a safe variation of the **Giuoco Piano**. Black can instead accept the gambit with 5...dxc3 but this is riskier because White will gain a lead in development. A possible continuation is 6.Nxc3 (the main alternative, favoured by **Grandmaster Sveshnikov**, is 6.Bxf7+ Kxf7 7.Qd5+ followed by 8.Qxc5) 6...d6 7.Bg5 (7.Qb3 is dubious as 7...Qd7 8.Nd5 Nge7 9.Qc3 0-0 10.0-0 Nxd5! 11.exd5 Ne5 12.Nxe5 dxe5 13.Qxe5 Bd6 is good for Black, but 7.0-0 may also be good) 7...Nge7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Nd5.

### Göring Gambit: 4.c3

Göring Gambit (4.c3)

The Göring Gambit is a relative of the **Danish Gambit** that starts with 4.c3. White sacrifices one or two pawns in return for a lead in development, and typically follows up by putting pressure on f7 with Bc4, Qb3 and sometimes Ng5, while Nc3-d5 is another common motif. The *Oxford Companion to Chess* notes that the gambit was first played at high levels by **Howard Staunton** in the 1840s, and the earliest game with it was probably played in 1843.<sup>[3]</sup> The first game with the gambit accepted may be Meek vs Morphy, New York 1857.<sup>[4]</sup> **Carl Theodor Göring** introduced it into master play in 1872, but while Göring's name is most often associated with the one-pawn gambit (5.Nxc3) Göring invariably used the double-pawn gambit with 5.Bc4. The gambit has been played by **Ljubomir Ljubojević**, **David Bronstein**, **Frank Marshall**, and **Jonathan Penrose**. In casual games **Alexander Alekhine** often transposed to it via the move order 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 dxc3 4.Nxc3, when ...Nc6 for Black and Nf3 for White often followed. In general, the opening is unpopular at master level but is more popular at club level. It is recommended to study the Göring Gambit in connection with the Danish.

**4...d5** Black can equalise by transposing to the Danish declined with 4...d5, when the critical line runs 5.exd5 Qxd5 6.cxd4 Bg4 7.Be2 Bb4+ 8.Nc3 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 Qc4 (or 6...Bb4+ 7.Nc3 Bg4 8.Be2 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 Qc4, leading to the same position), often referred to as the Capablanca Variation in view of the strength of Black's con-

cept in the game Marshall-Capablanca, Lake Hopatcong 1926.<sup>[5]</sup> This line (which can also arise from the **Chigorin Defense** to the Queen's Gambit),<sup>[6]</sup> forcing White to either exchange queens or forgo the right to **castle** with the risky 10.Be3, deters many players from employing this gambit. Equal endgames result after either 10.Qb3 Qxb3 11.axb3 Nge7 or 10.Bxc6+ bxc6 11.Qe2+ Qxe2+ 12.Kxe2 Ne7. If Black avoids steering for Capablanca's ending, e.g. with 6...Nf6 or 7...0-0-0 in the above lines, then White obtains good piece play in return for the isolated d-pawn. White can deviate with 6...Bg4 7.Nc3, with the idea of meeting 7...Bb4 with 8.a3 (or 6...Bb4+ 7.Nc3 Bg4 8.a3)<sup>[7]</sup> or the rare 5.Bd3,<sup>[8]</sup> neither of which promise an advantage but which avoid those endings.

**Other ways of declining** Black can also decline with 4...Nf6, transposing to a line of the **Ponziani Opening**. The continuation 5.e5 Ne4 was endorsed by *Dangerous Weapons*, 1.e4 e5 (Everyman Chess, 2008) but **Tim Harding** considers 5...Nd5 a better try for equality,<sup>[9]</sup> when White can continue 6.Bb5 a6 7.Ba4 Nb6 8.Bb3, 6.Qb3, 6.Bc4 or 6.cxd4. Another possibility is 4...Nge7 intending 5...d5, when the critical continuation is 5.Bc4 d5 6.exd5 Nxd5 7.0-0. According to IM **John Watson** Black may be able to equalise with 7...Be7.<sup>[10]</sup> However, declining with 4...d3 allows White some advantage after 5.Bxd3 d6 6.Bf4 Be7 7.h3 Nf6 8.Nbd2 Bd7 9.Qc2 according to *Batsford Chess Openings 2*.

**One-pawn gambit: 4...dxc3 5.Nxc3** If Black accepts the gambit with 4...dxc3, White can commit to sacrificing only one pawn with 5.Nxc3. Black's most critical response is generally considered to be 5...Bb4,<sup>[11]</sup> when White does not get enough compensation after 6.Bc4 d6 7.0-0 Bxc3 8.bxc3 Nf6!, when 9.Ba3 Bg4 is insufficient and 9.e5 Nxe5 10.Nxe5 dxe5 11.Qb3 (11.Qxd8+ Kxd8 12.Bxf7 Ke7 is also good for Black) 11...Qe7 12.Ba3 c5 does not give enough compensation for two pawns. White can deviate with 7.Qb3, when the old main line runs 7...Qe7 8.0-0 Bxc3, and here 9.Qxc3 gives White good compensation. Thus both John Watson and USCF master Mark Morss recommend 7...Bxc3+, in order to meet 8.Qxc3 with 8...Qf6! when White loses too much time with the queen. Thus White often continues 8.bxc3 when 8...Qe7 9.0-0 Nf6 can be met by 10.e5 (transposing back to lines arising from 7.0-0 Bxc3 8.bxc3 Nf6 9.e5, though these are insufficient for White) or the relatively unexplored 10.Bg5. Other deviations for White include 7.Ng5 and 6.Bg5.<sup>[12]</sup>

Black's main alternative is 5...d6 which usually leads to complications and approximately equal chances after 6.Bc4 Nf6 7.Qb3 Qd7 8.Ng5 Ne5 9.Bb5 c6 10.f4, or 7.Ng5 Ne5 8.Bb3 h6 9.f4. 5...Bc5 is also playable, transposing to the

Scotch Gambit after 6.Bc4 but cutting out the Bxf7+ possibility. 5...Nf6 6.Bc4 can transpose back to 5...d6 lines after 6...d6, or Black can attempt to transpose to 5...Bb4 lines with 6...Bb4 but this allows 7.e5 d5 8.exf6 dxc4 9.Qxd8+ Nxd8 10.fxg7 Rg8 11.Bh6.

**Double-pawn gambit: 4...dxc3 5.Bc4** Alternatively White can transpose into the Danish by offering a second pawn with 5.Bc4 cxb2 6.Bxb2, an approach which **John Emms** considers far more dangerous for Black. If Black does not accept the second pawn with 5...cxb2, then White can avoid Black's most critical response to 5.Nxc3 (5...Bb4 6.Bc4 d6). For instance, after 5...d6, White's best is 6.Nxc3, transposing back to the 5.Nxc3 d6 line. 5...Nf6 6.Nxc3 transposes to the 5.Nxc3 Nf6 line, 5...Bb4 is well met by 6.0-0 or 6.bxc3 (transposing to the Scotch Gambit), 5...Bc5 also transposes to the Scotch Gambit while 5...Be7?! (which is well met by 6.Qd5) transposes to the **Hungarian Defense**.

Thus Black's most critical response is to take the second pawn with 5...cxb2 6.Bxb2. Unlike in the Danish proper, having committed the queen's knight to c6 Black cannot safely meet 6.Bxb2 with 6...d5.<sup>[13]</sup> Instead, play often continues 6...d6 7.0-0 Be6 8.Bxe6 fxe6 9.Qb3 Qd7 or 7.Qb3 Qd7 8.Bc3 Nh6. 6...Bb4+ is the main alternative for Black, whereupon an approach with queenside castling is considered dangerous for Black, e.g. 7.Nc3 Nf6 8.Qc2 d6 9.0-0-0.

### 3.14.3 See also

- [List of chess openings](#)
- [List of chess openings named after places](#)

### 3.14.4 References

#### Notes

- [1] **Harry Golombek**, *Chess: A History*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1976, pp. 117-18.
- [2] *Chess Openings from Swedish Chess TV-program "Chess TV" - Episode 336*
- [3] **Staunton-NN**, Match 1843. *ChessGames.com*. Retrieved on 2011-04-15.
- [4] **Meek-Morphy**, New York 1857. *ChessGames.com*. Retrieved on 2011-04-15.
- [5] **Marshall-Capablanca**, Lake Hopatcong 1926. *ChessGames.com*. Retrieved on 2010-09-09.
- [6] *Gambits*. *Chesscafe.com*. Retrieved on 2010-09-10.

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- Lane, Gary. (2005). *The Scotch Game Explained*, Batsford, ISBN 0-7134-8940-5.

### 3.14.5 Further reading

- Albur, Lev (2007). *Chess Openings for White, Explained*. Chess Information and Research Center. ISBN 978-1889323206.
- Wells, Peter (1998). *The Scotch Game*. Sterling. ISBN 978-0713484663.
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- Botterill, G. S.; Harding, Tim (1977). *The Scotch*. B.T. Batsford Ltd.

### 3.14.6 External links

- The Games of the Match of Chess Played Between The London and The Edinburgh Chess Clubs In 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827 and 1828
- History of the Scotch at the Edinburgh Chess Club

## 3.15 Ponziani Opening

The **Ponziani Opening** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. c3

It is one of the oldest chess openings, having been discussed in the literature by 1497. It was advocated by Howard Staunton, generally considered the world’s strongest player from 1843 to 1851, in his 1847 book *The Chess-Player’s Handbook*. For some decades, it was often called “Staunton’s Opening” or the “English Knight’s Game” as a result. Today, it is usually known by the name of Domenico Lorenzo Ponziani, whose main contribution to the opening was his introduction, in 1769, of the **countergambit 3...f5!?**

The opening is now considered inferior to 3.Bb5, the Ruy Lopez, and 3.Bc4, the Italian Game, and is accordingly rarely seen today at any level of play. Black’s main responses are 3...Nf6, leading to quiet play, and 3...d5, leading to sharp play. Ponziani’s countergambit 3...f5!? was successfully played in the grandmaster game Hikaru Nakamura vs Julio Becerra Rivero, US Championship 2007.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 3.15.1 History

The opening 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3 is one of the oldest known openings, having been discussed in chess literature by no later than 1497. It was mentioned in both of the earliest chess treatises: the *Repetición de Amores y Arte de Ajedrez con ci Juegos de Partido* by Lucena<sup>[2]</sup> and the Göttingen manuscript.<sup>[3]</sup> Today the opening bears the surname of Domenico Lorenzo Ponziani. Although Ponziani did analyze the opening in 1769, his principal contribution was the introduction of the **countergambit 3...f5!?**<sup>[4]</sup> Later the opening was favored by Howard Staunton, who in *The Chess-Player’s Handbook* (1847) called it “so full of interest and variety, that its omission in many of the leading works on the game is truly unaccountable. ... it deserves, and, if we mistake not, will yet attain a higher place in the category of legitimate openings than has hitherto been assigned to it”.<sup>[4]</sup>

### Nomenclature

Staunton clumsily referred to the opening as “The Queen’s Bishop’s Pawn Game in the King’s Knight’s Opening”,<sup>[4]</sup> as did George H. D. Gossip in *The*

*Chess Player's Manual* (1888, American edition 1902).<sup>[5]</sup> **Napoleon Marache**, one of the leading American players, similarly called it the “Queen’s Bishop’s Pawn Game” in his 1866 manual.<sup>[6]</sup> In their treatise *Chess Openings Ancient and Modern* (1889, 1896), **E. Freeborough** and the **Reverend C.E. Ranken** called it “Staunton’s Opening”.<sup>[7][8]</sup> In an appendix to later editions of Staunton’s work, **R.F. Green**, editor of the **British Chess Magazine**, also called it “Staunton’s Opening”, directing those seeking a definition of “Ponziani’s Game” to the former name.<sup>[9]</sup> Green referred to 3...f5 as “Ponziani’s Counter Gambit”.<sup>[10]</sup> Chess historian **H. J. R. Murray** in his celebrated 1913 work *A History of Chess* called the opening simply the “Staunton”,<sup>[11]</sup> explaining that he was using “the ordinary names of the Openings as used by English players of the present day”.<sup>[12]</sup> **James Mason** in his treatise *The Art of Chess* (Fourth Edition c. 1910?) referred to the opening as the “Ponziani–Staunton Attack”.<sup>[13]</sup> The famous German *Handbuch des Schachspiels*, which went through eight editions between 1843 and 1916, called it the “Englisches Springerspiel” (English Knight’s Game).<sup>[14]</sup> The Reverend **E.E. Cunningham** in *The Modern Chess Primer* (Thirteenth Edition 1933) referred to it as the “Ponziani Opening (sometimes called Staunton’s)”.<sup>[15]</sup>

**Wilhelm Steinitz**, the first **World Champion**, in his 1895 treatise *The Modern Chess Instructor* (Part II), called the opening the “Ponziani Opening”,<sup>[16]</sup> as did his successor, **Emanuel Lasker**, in *Lasker’s Manual of Chess*.<sup>[17]</sup> Similarly, **Frank Marshall** in *Chess Openings*,<sup>[18]</sup> the authors of *Modern Chess Openings* (Second Edition 1913),<sup>[19]</sup> and **Siegbert Tarrasch** in *The Game of Chess* (1931, English translation 1938)<sup>[20]</sup> called it “Ponziani’s Opening”. **William Cook** in *The Chess Players’ Compendium* (Fifth Edition 1910) called it “Ponziani’s Game”,<sup>[21]</sup> while **Francis Joseph Lee** and **Gossip** in *The Complete Chess – Guide* (1903) called it “Ponziani’s Knight’s Game”.<sup>[22]</sup> Contemporary authors likewise call it the “Ponziani Opening”,<sup>[23][24]</sup> “Ponziani’s Opening”,<sup>[25]</sup> or simply the “Ponziani”.<sup>[26]</sup>

### 3.15.2 Introduction and overview

Ponziani

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3

The Ponziani is rarely played today except as a surprise weapon, because Black has the pleasant choice between equalizing easily and attempting to obtain an advantage with sharper play.<sup>[27]</sup> White’s third move prepares to build a powerful **pawn center** with 4.d4, a logical objective also seen in the more popular **Ruy Lopez** and **Giuoco Piano**. However, 3.c3 is somewhat premature because the move: (1) takes away the most natural square for White’s queen

knight,<sup>[28]</sup> (2) temporarily creates a **hole** on d3, and (3) develops a pawn rather than a piece leaving White behind in development<sup>[29]</sup> and not well placed to meet a counterattack in the center. Moreover, unlike in the **Giuoco Piano**, where White’s d4 advance attacks Black’s **king’s bishop** on c5, in the Ponziani d4 will not gain a **tempo**. On the positive side, the move 3.c3 creates a second diagonal for the white queen.<sup>[29]</sup>

As early as 1904, Marshall wrote that, “There is no point in White’s third move unless Black plays badly. ... White practically surrenders the **privilege of the first move**.”<sup>[30]</sup> More recently, **Graham Burgess** called the Ponziani “a relic from a bygone age, popular neither at top level nor at club level”.<sup>[31]</sup> **Bruce Pandolfini** has said,

Curiously, every great teacher of openings who investigated the Ponziani has concluded that it leads to interesting play and deserves to be played more often. Yet it has never captured the fancy of chessplayers in general, and it remains to be seen whether the Ponziani is an opening of the past or of the future.<sup>[32]</sup>

In *Chess Master Vs. Chess Amateur*, **Max Euwe** and **Walter Meiden** wrote,

What should one do with this opening? It is no opening for beginners, because tactics predominate in the play. There are no simple strategic principles to govern the general lines in this opening.<sup>[29]</sup>

### 3.15.3 Variations

After 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3 the main continuations are:

- 3...Nf6, the **Jaenisch Variation** is considered Black’s safest course and probably a deterrent to possible Ponziani adopters because positions arise ranging from the highly chaotic to dull passiveness.<sup>[33]</sup> White continues 4.d4, consistent with 3.c3.<sup>[33]</sup>
- 4...Nxe4 often continues 5.d5 Ne7 (5...Nb8 is also playable; Black even may invest a knight with 5...Bc5 6.dxc6 Bxf2+ 7.Ke2 Bb6 8.Qd5 Nf2 9.Rg1 O-O 10.cxb7 Bxb7 11.Qxb7 Qf6 12.Na3 e4 13.Nc4 Rab8 14.Qd5 exf3+ 15.gxf3 Rfe8+ 16.Kd2 Ne4+ 17.fxe4 Bxg1=<sup>[34]</sup>) 6.Nxe5 Ng6, (not 6...d6?? when 7.Bb5+! wins material)<sup>[35]</sup> and now either 7.Qd4 Qf6 8.Qxe4 Qxe5, a relatively new try 7.Qf3<sup>[nb 1]</sup> or 7.Nxg6 hxg6 8.Qe2 Qe7 9.Bf4 d6 10.Na3 Rh5 11.0-0-0 Rf5 leads to equality according to *MCO-15*.<sup>[37]</sup>

- 4...exd4, Black can also play this move leading to a position that can arise in the **Göring Gambit**,<sup>[33]</sup> meeting 5.e5 with either 5...Nd5 or 5...Ne4, leading to more double-edged play than after 4...Nxe4.
- 3...d5, is an aggressive response, striking back in the center. Usually in Kings Pawn openings an early ...d5 by Black would lose a tempo after exd5 Qxd5 when White plays Nc3 attacking the black queen.<sup>[29]</sup> Here however, White is deprived of the move Nc3 as the c3-square is occupied by a pawn.<sup>[29]</sup>
  - 4.Bb5 is considered inferior to 4.Qa4<sup>[23]</sup> but the game becomes sharp with chances for both sides, although Black may emerge with advantage after 4...dxe4! 5.Nxe5 Qg5! 6. Qa4 Qxg2 7. Rf1 Bh3.<sup>[38]</sup>
  - 4.Qa4, White indirectly threatens the e5-pawn by pinning the knight.<sup>[2]</sup> Black has to choose either to defend the e5-pawn with 4...f6, or 4...Qd6, or be prepared to sacrifice a pawn with either 4...Bd7, or 4...Nf6.
    - 4...Bd7, the **Caro Variation**, an unconvincing variation according to Euwe<sup>[29]</sup> after 5.exd5 Nd4 6.Qd1 Nxf3 7.Qxf3 Black has gambled a pawn with an unclear position.<sup>[23]</sup>
    - 4...Qd6, protecting e5 without weakening the pawn structure.<sup>[38]</sup> Batsford Chess Openings 2 gives the move an **exclamation mark**<sup>[26]</sup> but does not mention the reply 5.d4, the main move in the later **Nunn's Chess Openings**.<sup>[23]</sup>
    - 4...Nf6, the **Leonhardt Variation**. White can now gain material with 5.Nxe5, with theory giving 5...Bd6 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.d3 0-0 8.Be2 Re8 with a position in which Black has compensation for the pawn.<sup>[23]</sup>
    - 4...f6, the **Steinitz Variation**, protecting the central e5-pawn is considered solid and best but unnatural because it deprives the black knight of f6.<sup>[29]</sup> The line can continue 5.Bb5 Nge7 6.exd5 Qxd5 with either 7.d4 Bd7 or 7.0-0 Bd7 and an equal position.<sup>[23]</sup>
- 3...f5, the **Ponziani Countergambit** is an aggressive Black response originally suggested by the 18th-century Italian writer, Ponziani.<sup>[33]</sup> In 1951, **Boris Spassky** chose this countergambit against **Yakov Estrin**.<sup>[39]</sup> The countergambit is considered better for White after 4.d4 fxe4 5.Nxe5 Qf6 6.Ng4 Qg6 7.Bf4<sup>[26]</sup> or 5...Nf6 6.Bg5.<sup>[23]</sup>
- 3...Nge7, the unusual **Kmoch Variation** was advocated by **Hans Kmoch**. According to **Reuben Fine**, citing analysis by Kmoch, Black equalizes after 4.d4 exd4 5.Bc4 d5 6.exd5 Nxd5 7.0-0 Be7 8.Nxd4 Nxd4 9.cxd4 Be6.<sup>[40]</sup>
- 3...d6, reinforces the e5=pawn and hopes to show that c3 was unnecessary. However, it is considered passive and does not present white with any problems. After 4. Bc4, black's most common responses are 4...g6, 4...Be6, and 4...Bg4.<sup>[41]</sup>

### 3.15.4 Illustrative games

Here is a quiet draw typical of the 3...Nf6 line:

V. Medvedev (2365) versus Charles Milgram (2375), ICCF 1991<sup>[42]</sup>

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. c3 Nf6 4. d4 Nxe4 5. d5 Ne7 6. Nxe5 Ng6 7. Qd4 Qf6 8. Qxe4 Qxe5 9. Qxe5+ Nxe5 10. Nd2 d6 11. Nc4 Nxc4 12. Bxc4 Be7 13. 0-0 0-0 14. Re1 Bf6 15. Be3 Bd7 1/2-1/2

While this game was agreed drawn there are good winning chances for White in this type of endgame.<sup>[43]</sup>

The variation 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3 Nge7 has been attributed to Reti due to him having tried it against Tartakower and lost. Recent analysis gives White the edge, i.e. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3 Nge7 4.Bc4 (immediately targeting f7) d5 5.exd5 Nxd5 and now either 6.0-0 or 6.Qb3 lead to a White advantage.<sup>[44]</sup> Also playable for White is 4. Bb5 which transposes to a line of the **Cozio Defense to the Ruy Lopez**.<sup>[45]</sup>

Chigorin vs. Gossip, 1889  
Position after 12...Ke7?

Here are two games illustrating the wild tactical play that often develops in the 3...d5 4.Qa4 f6 5.Bb5 Ne7 line:

- **Mikhail Chigorin** versus **George H.D. Gossip**, New York 1889:<sup>[46]</sup>

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. c3 d5 3...Nf6 is the safest response if Black is not well versed in the ensuing complications—as Gossip proves not to be.<sup>[47]</sup> 4. Qa4 f6 5. Bb5 Ne7 6. exd5 Qxd5 7. 0-0 7.d4! is the main line today.<sup>[48]</sup> 7... Bd7? 7...e4! 8.Ne1 Bf5 9.f3 leads to equality.<sup>[49]</sup> 8. d4 e4 9. Nfd2 Ng6? 9...f5! or 9...0-0-0 was better.<sup>[49]</sup> 10. Bc4 Qa5 11. Qb3 f5? 11...0-0-0! was the best chance.<sup>[49]</sup> 12. Bf7+ Ke7? 12...Kd8 is forced.<sup>[49]</sup> 13. Nc4! Setting up a problem-like finish.<sup>[50]</sup> 13... Qa6 14. Bg5+! Kxf7 15. Nd6# 1-0 Black's king cannot escape the double check.

- S. Kaouras versus R. Vorlop, e-mail 2003:

**1. e4 Nc6 2. Nf3 e5 3. c3 d5 4. Qa4 f6 5. Bb5 Nge7 6. exd5 Qxd5 7. d4** 7.0–0 is considered the main line, e.g. 7...Bd7 8.d4 a6!? (8...exd4 9.cxd4 Ne5 10.Bxd7+ Qxd7 is equal) 9.c4 Qf7 10.d5 Nb8 11.Bxd7+ Nxd7 12.Nc3 Nf5 13.b4 gave White the advantage in S. Hassan–B. Amin, Cairo 2003. **7... e4** Alternatives are the old move, 7...Bd7, and 7...Bg4, which is currently popular at the international level. **8. c4 Qd7 9. Nfd2 Qxd4 10. 0–0 Bd7 11. Nc3 a6 12. Nb3 Qe5 13. c5 f5 14. g3 Ng6 15. Rd1 Be7 16. Bc4 Nd4** Now White appears to be in deep trouble. **17. Qxd7+!** The best practical choice, which inspires White to play very aggressively. **17... Kxd7 18. Be3 Nh4** If 18...Kc8, 19.Bxd4 traps Black's queen. **19. gxf4 Kc8 20. Bxd4** White has three pieces for the queen and the initiative; Black's pieces are uncoordinated. **20... Qf4 21. Be6+ Kb8 22. Ne2 Qf3 23. Ng3 Bxh4 24. Be3 g6** 24...f4? 25.Nd2 traps the queen. **25. Rd7 Bf6 26. c6 b5 27. Rd5 Re8 28. Nc5 Bg7 29. Rad1!** White creates a mating net by threatening Rd8+. **29... Ka7 30. Rd7 Be5 31. Bxf5 gxf5 32. Nb7+ Qxe3 33. fxe3** Having regained the queen, White has a winning material advantage. **33... f4 34. exf4 Bxf4 35. Nd6 Bxd6 36. R1xd6 Kb6 37. Rd1 Re6 38. Re1 c3 39. Rxh7 Rae8 40. Rg7 Kxc6 41. Re2 Re5 42. Nf1 Kd5 43. Kg2 c5 44. Rg3 Kd4 45. h4 c4 46. Rxe3 Rxe3 47. Nxe3 Kd3 48. Kh3 Kd2 49. Nd5 Kc1 50. Rg2 Re5 51. Nf4 b4 52. h5 Kb1 53. h6 Re8 54. Kg4 Rh8 55. Kg5 c3 56. bxc3 bxc3 57. Rh2 c2 58. Nd3 1–0** Notes based on those by International Master Gary Lane.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 3.15.5 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 3.15.6 Notes

- [1] 7.Qf3. In M Schäfer vs S. Van Gisbergen Münster 1993 the game continued 7...Qe7 8.Nxg6 hxg6 9.Be3 Rh5!? (a creative move adding pressure to the d5-pawn) 10. Bd3 Nf6 11. c4 Qe5 12. Qe2 Bb4+ 13.Nd2 d6 14.0-0-0 Bxd2+ 15.Qxd2 Kf8 16.Rde1 (White's pressure on the e-file makes his advantage obvious.) Ng4 17.f4 Qf6 18.Bg1 g5 19.Rf1 gxf4 20.Rxf4 Qh6 21.Be2 Ne5 22.Bxh5 Qxf4 (a cute reduction combination, but unfortunately for Black, he is still left with a difficult endgame) 23. Qxf4 Nd3+ 24.Kd2 Nxf4 25.Bf3 Bf5 26.Bd4 f6 27.Rf1 Bg6 28.h4 b6 29.g3 Nd3 30.h5 Bh7 31.h6! Ne5 32.Be2 Re8 33.a4 c5 34.dxc6 Nxc6 35.Bxf6+ Kg8 38.Bc3 (better is 35. c5!) and White won in 52 moves.<sup>[36]</sup>

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- [4] Howard Staunton, *The Chess-Player's Handbook*, Henry G. Bohn, 1847, p. 182.
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- [15] Rev. E.E. Cunningham, *The Modern Chess Primer*, David McKay, 13th ed. 1933, p. 181.
- [16] Wilhelm Steinitz, *The Modern Chess Instructor*, Edition Olms AG, Zürich, 1990 (reprint), Part II (originally published in 1895), p. 1. ISBN 3-283-00111-1. Steinitz wrote that it "is also called the English Knight's Game, or Staunton's Opening". *Id.*
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- [18] F. J. Marshall, *Chess Openings*, *British Chess Magazine*, 1904, p. 47.
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### 3.15.8 Further reading

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- Taylor, Dave; Hayward, Keith (2010). *Play the Ponziani*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-620-8.

## 3.16 Inverted Hungarian Opening

### Inverted Hungarian Opening

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Be2

The **Inverted Hungarian Opening** or **Tayler Opening** is an uncommon chess opening that starts with the moves:

1.e4 e5  
2.Nf3 Nc6  
3.Be2

It is so named because the position of White's bishop on e2 resembles that of Black's bishop on e7 in the Hungarian Defense.

### 3.16.1 Description

The Inverted Hungarian is even rarer than the already very uncommon Hungarian Defense, although it is perfectly playable for White. It may appeal to White players who wish to avoid extensively analyzed double king pawn openings such as the Ruy Lopez, and to those who favor defensive positional maneuvering battles as also often result from the Hungarian Defense. With the advantage of the first move, White has greater latitude to play moves that are not objectively the strongest without incurring disadvantage.

Since White's third move 3.Be2 makes no threats, there are many satisfactory replies for Black. If White plays a setup resembling the Black side of the Hanham Variation of the Philidor Defense (3...Nf6 4.d3 d5 5.Nbd2), the opening is sometimes called the **Inverted Hanham Opening**.

### 3.16.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 3.16.3 References

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.

## 3.17 Konstantinopolsky Opening

The **Konstantinopolsky Opening** is a rarely played chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. g3

### 3.17.1 Description

The opening was introduced in the game Alexander Konstantinopolsky versus Viacheslav Ragozin, Moscow, 1956.

The Konstantinopolsky Opening is rarely seen at the top levels of chess, although some grandmasters such as Savielly Tartakower (who played many unusual openings) have experimented with it. Black is considered to achieve an easy game with the natural and strong 3...Nf6 4.d3 d5.

### 3.17.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 3.17.3 References

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.

### 3.17.4 External links

- King's pawn game • Konstantinopolsky opening [ecochess.com](http://ecochess.com)

## 3.18 Three Knights Opening

The **Three Knights Game** is a chess opening which most commonly begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Nc3

In the Three Knights Game, Black chooses to break symmetry in order to avoid the main lines of what is often considered the drawish Four Knights Game after the usual 3...Nf6.

The relevant ECO code is C46.

### 3.18.1 Black's third move

After tries such as 3...d6 or 3...Be7, White can play 4.d4, leaving Black with a cramped position resembling Philidor's Defense. If Black plays 3...Bc5 instead, White can eliminate Black's outpost at e5: 4.Nxe5 Nxe5 5.d4 Bd6 6.dxe5 Bxe5. Since tournament praxis shows the line seems to favor White, Black usually plays 3...Bb4 or 3...g6. Continuations then are typically 3...Bb4 4.Nd5 and 3...g6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nd5.

Another alternative for Black is 3...f5!? – the **Winawer Defense** (or **Gothic Defense**). Then 4.Bb5 transposes into the Schliemann variation of the Ruy Lopez with 4.Nc3.

The Three Knights is almost never seen at master level nowadays, as Black players have sought more active tries, even within the Four Knights.

### 3.18.2 Reversed knight position

The similar position with Black having moved ...Nf6 is called **Petrov's Three Knights Game**, although it too usually leads to the Four Knights Game.

### 3.18.3 Example game

Rosenthal vs Steinitz, 1873:

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3 g6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bg7 6.Be3 Nge7 7.Bc4 d6 8.0-0 0-0 9.f4 Na5 10.Bd3 d5 11.exd5 Nxd5 12.Nxd5 Qxd5 13.c3 Rd8 14.Qc2 Nc4 15.Bxc4 Qxc4 16.Qf2 c5 17.Nf3 b6 18.Ne5 Qe6 19.Qf3 Ba6 20.Rfe1 f6 21.Ng4 h5 22.Nf2 Qf7 23.f5 g5 24.Rad1 Bb7 25.Qg3 Rd5 26.Rxd5 Qxd5 27.Rd1 Qxf5 28.Qc7 Bd5 29.b3 Re8 30.c4 Bf7 31.Bc1 Re2 32.Rf1 Qc2 33.Qg3 Qxa2 34.Qb8+ Kh7 35.Qg3 Bg6 36.h4 g4 37.Nd3 Qxb3 38.Qc7 Qxd3 0-1

### 3.18.4 See also

- **Open Game**

### 3.18.5 References

- **Raymond Keene, Garry Kasparov** (1994) [1989]. *Batsford Chess Openings* (2nd ed.). B.T. Batsford Ltd. ISBN 0-8050-3409-9.

## 3.19 Four Knights Game

The **Four Knights Game** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Nc3 Nf6

This is the most common sequence, but the knights may develop in any order to reach the same position.

The opening is fairly popular with beginners who strictly adhere to the opening principle: “Develop knights before bishops.” It was one of the workhorses in the family of the Open Game, at even the highest levels, until World War I. Thereafter it fell by the wayside, along with a number of open games. In this period ambitious players explored the

**Ruy Lopez**, believing it a better attempt for White to exploit the advantage of the first move. In the 1990s, this opening saw a renaissance, and is now seen in the praxis of players from beginner to grandmaster.

The Four Knights usually leads to quiet positional play, though there are some sharp variations. The ECO codes for the Four Knights Game are C49 (Symmetrical Variation, 4.Bb5 Bb4), C48 (4.Bb5 without 4...Bb4), C47 (4.d4 and others).

### 3.19.1 Variations

#### 4.Bb5

Spanish Variation

White's most common move is 4.Bb5, the **Spanish Variation**. This variation can also be reached from the **Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defence**. After 4.Bb5, Black has three major alternatives.

The first of these is **4...Bb4**, the Symmetrical Variation.

Black can play more aggressively by **4...Nd4**, the **Rubinstein Variation**. White cannot win a pawn with 5.Nxe5, since Black regains the pawn with the advantage of the bishop pair after 5...Qe7 6.Nf3 (6.f4 Nxb5 7.Nxb5 d6) Nxb5 7.Nxb5 Qxe4+ 8.Qe2 Qxe2+ 9.Kxe2 Nd5! 10.c4 a6! White most often plays 5.Ba4, when Black usually continues in gambit fashion with 5...Bc5!? 6.Nxe5 0-0 7.Nd3 Bb6 8.e5 Ne8 followed by ...d6. Another line, which discourages many ambitious Black players from playing the Rubinstein, is 5.Nxd4 exd4 6.e5 dxc3 7.exf6 Qxf6 (7...cxd2+? 8.Bxd2 Qxf6 9.0-0 is dangerous for Black) 8.dxc3 Qe5+. This often leads to a quick draw after 9.Qe2 Qxe2+.

In recent years, Black has tried **4...Bd6!?** with varying results. That move takes the sting out of 5.Bxc6, which is met with 5...dxc6 with a good game. If White plays quietly, Black will regroup with ...0-0, ...Re8, ...Bf8, and ...d6.

#### 4.d4

If White plays 4.d4, the **Scotch Four Knights Game** arises. This leads to a more open position, which can also be reached from the **Scotch Game**, e.g. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3. This variation was played in the fifth game of the 1996 **Deep Blue versus Garry Kasparov** match.

One reason White may choose the Four Knights (3.Nc3) move order over the Scotch (3.d4), besides fearing that after 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Black may choose 4...Bc5 or 4...Qh4, is that White may want to play the Belgrade Gambit (1.e4

e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nd5!?). It is not possible to reach the Belgrade from the Scotch. However, the Belgrade is a distant second in popularity to 5.Nxd4.

#### 4.Bc4

A further possibility is 4.Bc4, the Italian Four Knights Game, or Prussian Four Knights Game, popular in the 1880s, though this line is regarded as inferior according to Pinski, and an outright mistake by IM Larry D. Evans.<sup>[1]</sup> Black can preserve the symmetry by 4...Bc5, leading to the quiet *Giuoco Pianissimo*. A better move order for White that leads to this position is via the *Giuoco Piano* by 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.Nc3 Nf6. The line is a favorite among younger players due to its simple and easy development, but has also been used successfully by Nigel Short against Antoaneta Stefanova.<sup>[2]</sup>

The problem with playing for this position via the Four Knights Game is that after 4.Bc4, the pseudo-sacrifice of a knight with 4...Nxe4!, the center fork trick. Then 5.Bxf7+?, though superficially attractive, relinquishes the bishop pair and central control to Black. After 5...Kxf7 6.Nxe4 d5 7.Neg5+ Kg8, Black is already threatening 8...e4, and after 8.d3 h6 9.Nh3 Bg4, Black has a very powerful position, with an unopposed light-squared bishop, a strong duo of pawns in the centre, and a safe king, while White needs to work out how to get the displaced knight on h3 into play; often it will need to be played back to g1.

Rather than 5.Bxf7+?, a better chance for White to play for equality is 5.Nxe4, even though 5...d5 regains the piece with a good game, e.g., 6.Bd3 (6.Bxd5? Qxd5 7.Nc3 Qd8 Estrin; 6.Bb5?! dxe4 7.Nxe5 Qg5! Collijn's *Lärobok*; 6.d4 dxc4 7.d5 Ne7 8.Nc3 c6 Cordel–Schupli, 1905) 6...dxe4 (the recently discovered 6...Nb4 is also playable) 7.Bxe4 Bd6 8.d4 Nxd4 9.Nxd4 exd4 10.Qxd4 0-0 11.Be3 (11.0-0?? Bxh2+ wins) Qe7 (Tartakower–Atkins, London 1922<sup>[3]</sup>) and now the natural 12.0-0 Be5 would be awkward for White.<sup>[4]</sup> In the above line, more ambitious is 8...exd4 9.Nxd4 0-0!?, as in a match game between Siegbert Tarrasch and Emanuel Lasker in 1916, which led to a Black win in 23 moves.<sup>[5]</sup>

Another try is 5.0-0!? transposing to a variation of the Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit.

#### 4.g3

Igor Glek has favored 4.g3, preparing development of the bishop to g2. According to Pinski, Black's main responses are 4...Bc5 and 4...d5, both of which are reckoned to equalize for Black. A Halloween Gambit style 4...Nxe4 has also been tried at the grandmaster level as in two games between Ilya Smirin and Bartłomiej Macieja.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### 4.Be2

Though rarely seen, this move is playable. For example, if Black plays 4...Bb4, White has the responses 5.Nd5, 5.0-0, and 5.d3, which retain equality with accurate play.

#### 4.a3

The quiet waiting move 4.a3 (called the Gunsberg Variation) is a specialty of Polish Grandmaster Paweł Blehm.

#### 4.Nxe5

A dubious gambit is 4.Nxe5?!, the so-called Halloween Gambit. After 4...Nxe5 5.d4, White tries to seize the center with his pawns and drive the black knights back to their home squares. Grandmaster Larry Kaufman says that this line is refuted by 5...Nc6 6.d5 Bb4! 7.dxc6 Nxe4 8.Qd4 Qe7, which he attributes to Jan Pinski.<sup>[7]</sup> According to Max Euwe's opening series volume 11, Black has a decisive advantage after 4...Nxe5 5.d4 Ng6 6.e5 Ng8 7.Bc4 d5 8.Bxd5 c6.<sup>[8]</sup>

### 3.19.2 See also

- Open Game
- Three Knights Game
- Two Knights Defense
- Giuoco Piano
- Ruy Lopez
- Scotch game

### 3.19.3 References

- [1] *The Fork Trick*, published in *Chess Life* April 2000 and May 2000 Facsimile online (chesscamp.net)
- [2] Checkpoint no. 55, Carsten Hansen, ChessCafe.com, 2003, see review of *The Four Knights*.
- [3]
- [4] Dr. S. Tartakower and J. du Mont, *500 Master Games of Chess*, Dover Publications, 1975, p. 53. ISBN 0-486-23208-5.
- [5] This game is analyzed by Jan Pinski in *The Four Knights*, and can be played through here.

- [6] “Ilya Smirin vs Bartłomiej Macieja, CZE-chT 0304 2003”. ChessGames.com. Retrieved 16 March 2010. and “Ilya Smirin vs Bartłomiej Macieja TCh-CZE Extraliga 2003-4 2004”. ChessGames.com. Retrieved 16 March 2010.
- [7] Kaufman, Larry (2004). *The Chess Advantage in Black and White*. McKay Chess Library. p. 328. ISBN 0-8129-3571-3.
- [8] A Breeze in the sleepy Four Knight’s Game

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- Raymond Keene, Garry Kasparov (1994) [1989]. *Batsford Chess Openings* (2nd ed.). B.T. Batsford Ltd. ISBN 0-8050-3409-9.
- Jan Pinski (2003). *The Four Knights*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-311-X.
- Harding, T. D.; Botterill, G. S. (1977). “Two Knights: Other Lines”. *The Italian Game*. B. T. Batsford Limited. pp. 119–27. ISBN 0-7134-3261-6.

### 3.19.4 Further reading

- Obodchuk, Andrey (2011). *The Four Knights Game*. New in Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-372-4.

### 3.19.5 External links

- Tim Krabbé’s article on the Halloween Gambit
- Unorthodox Openings Newsletter #13, Critical Lines in the Halloween Gambit by Paul Keiser

## 3.20 Halloween Gambit

The **Halloween Gambit** (also known as the **Müller–Schulze Gambit** or **Leipzig Gambit**) is an aggressive chess opening gambit in which White sacrifices a knight early-on for a single pawn. The opening is an offshoot of the normally staid **Four Knights Game** and is defined by the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Nc3 Nf6
4. Nxe5

The theoretician Oskar Cordel reported in 1888 that **Leipzig** club players used the opening to dangerous effect, but he did not believe it was sound. Their name for it, *Gambit Müller und Schulze*, was not after any players by those names, but rather a jocular German equivalent of “Smith and Jones”, or, “Tom, Dick, and Harry”. The modern name “Halloween Gambit” was given by the German player Stefan Jakob, who explained that “Many players are shocked, the way they would be frightened by a Halloween mask, when they are mentally prepared for a boring Four Knight’s, and then they are faced with Nxe5”.<sup>[1]</sup>

White’s objective is to seize the center with pawns and drive back Black’s knights. After **4... Nxe5**, White usually plays **5. d4** (5.f4 does nothing for his development), after which Black can retreat the attacked knight to either g6 or c6.

### 3.20.1 5...Ng6 retreat

Position after 5...Ng6 6.e5 Ng8 7.Bc4

When Black retreats 5...Ng6, White chases the f6-knight with 6.e5. Then after 6...Ng8 7.Bc4, former world champion **Max Euwe** recommended 7...d5 8.Bxd5 c6, contending in volume 11 of his opening series that Black has a decisive advantage.<sup>[1]</sup>

Instead of holding on to the extra piece with the usual 6...Ng8, a more logical continuation according to Eric Schiller is 6...Bb4, giving Black the better game after 7.exf6 Qxf6 with a lead in development and pressure in the center.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 3.20.2 5...Nc6 retreat

When Black retreats 5...Nc6, White chases the knight again with 6.d5. Then Black has 6...Ne5 (the Main line), or 6...Bb4 (Pinski’s move).

#### Main line 6...Ne5

After 5...Nc6 6.d5 Ne5 7.f4 Ng6 8.e5 Ng8 9.d6

After 6...Ne5, White chases again with 7.f4. Then after 7...Ng6 the game usually continues 8.e5 Ng8 9.d6, completing the most commonly seen sequence in the Gambit (see diagram). In this position White is on the attack, and his attack will generally persevere (with tactics such as Nb5 after a pawn trade at d6).

**Pinski's 6...Bb4**

After 5...Nc6 6.d5 Bb4

GM **Larry Kaufman** wrote in 2004 that the Müller–Schulze Gambit is **refuted** by 4...Nxe5 5.d4 Nc6 6.d5 Bb4! 7.dxc6 Nxe4 8.Qd4 Qe7, which he attributes to the Polish **IM** Jan Pinski.<sup>[3][4]</sup> In 2003 Pinski analyzed 9.Qxg7 Nxc3 10.Be3 Nd5+ 11.c3 Rf8 12.cxb4 Nxe3 13.fxe3 Qxb4+, concluding “Black is very close to winning”.<sup>[5]</sup> After the alternative 9.Be3 0-0 10.Bd3 Nxc3 11.bxc3 Ba5 12.0-0 Bb6 13.Qf4 Bxe3 14.fxe3 dxc6, Black had a superior pawn structure in **Gaillard–Platel, France 2003 (0–1,30)**. Black can also play 9...f5. The game **Sigfusson (2288)–Bellin (2381)**, Reykjavik 2009, continued 10.cxd7+ Bxd7 11.Be2 Bc5 12.Bh5+ Kd8! 13.Qd3 (13.Qd5 Bxe3 14.fxe3 Nxc3 15.bxc3 Qh4+ 16.g3 Qxh5 17.Rd1 Qe8 18.Qxb7 Qxe3+ 19.Kf1 Qe4+–) 13...Bxe3 14.Qxe3 Nxc3 15.Qxe7+ Kxe7 16.bxc3 Bc6 when Black had the better endgame and won in 52 moves.<sup>[6]</sup>

### 3.20.3 Halloween Gambit with colors reversed

A similar gambit can be tried by Black: after 4.g3, Black can play 4...Nxe4!? This line is arguably sounder than its White counterpart because White's 4.g3 has weakened his f3-square. Moreover, White cannot play the line recommended by Kaufman with colors reversed, because 5.Nxe4 d5 6.Nc3 d4 7.Bb5? dxc3 8.Nxe5? Qd5 9.Qe2? loses to 9...Qxh1+. However, with the pawn on g3, Nh4 is possible and it should be easier to **castle**.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 3.20.4 Illustrative games

The following **speed chess** games show what can befall an unprepared player of the black pieces:

- Brause–N.N., German Internet Chess Server 1997  
1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Nxe5 Nxe5 5. d4 Ng6 6. e5 Ng8 7. Bc4 c6 8. Qf3 f6 9. 0-0 d5 10. exd6e.p. Bxd6 11. Ne4 N8e7? 12. Qxf6!! gxf6? 13. Nxf6+ Kf8 14. Bh6# 1–0
- Brause–N.N., Internet Chess Club 1997  
1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Nxe5 Nxe5 5. d4 Nc6 6. d5 Nb8 7. e5 Ng8 8. d6 Nc6 9. Nb5 cxd6 10. exd6 Bxd6? (10...Qf6) 11. Qxd6 Qe7+ 12. Be3 Qxd6 13. Nxd6+ Kf8 14. Bc4 Ne5 15. Bb3 Ne7 16. 0-0-0 f6 17. f4 Ng4 18. Rhe1 (threatening 19.Bc5 and 20.Nxc8 Rxc8 21.Rxd7) 1–0

The next game, played in a Halloween Gambit thematic tournament, won the prize for the most spectacular game won by White (annotations from **chessville.com**):

- Torrecillas (2389)–Keiser (1932), Email 2003  
1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Nxe5 Nxe5 5. d4 Ng6 6. e5 Ng8 7. Bc4 Bb4 8. Qf3 f6 9. 0-0 Bxc3 10. bxc3 d5 11. exd6e.p. cxd6 12. Ba3 N8e7 13. Rfe1 Qc7 14. Bb3 Kd8 15. c4 Bd7 16. Rad1 Qc6 17. Qc3 a5 18. d5 Qc7 19. c5 b5 20. Qd2 b4 21. cxd6 Qxd6 22. Bb2 a4 23. Bc4 Ke8 24. a3 Ne5 25. Ba2 b3 26. cxb3 axb3 27. Bxb3 Kf7 28. f4 N5g6 29. Re6 Qxf4 30. Qe2 Qb8 31. Ba2 Qa7+ 32. Kh1 Kf8 33. d6 Ng8 34. Qc4 Nh6 35. Bxf6! gxf6 (35...Bxe6 36.Qxe6 gxf6 37.Qxf6+ Nf7 38.d7 mates shortly) 36. Rxf6+ Ke8 (36...Kg7 37.Qc3) 37. Rxc6 hxc6 38. Qc3 Rh7 39. Qf6 Ba4 40. Qxc6+ Nf7 41. Rf1 Bc2 (41...Bc6 42.Bxf7+ Qxf7 [42...Rxf7 43.Qg8+ Kd7 44.Rxf7+] 43.Rxf7 Rxf7 44.Qg8+ Kd7 [44...Rf8 45.Qe6+ Kd8 46.Qe7+ Kc8 47.Qc7#] 45.Qxf7+ Kxd6 46.h4+–) 42. Qxc2 1–0

### 3.20.5 References

- [1] Krabbé, Tim (2005-11-16). “A Breeze in the Sleepy 4-Knights Game”. Xs4all.nl. Retrieved 2013-05-09.
- [2] Schiller, Eric (1998). “Four Knights • Halloween Gambit”. *Unorthodox Chess Openings*. Cardoza Publishing. pp. 160–63. ISBN 0-940685-73-6.
- [3] Larry Kaufman, *The Chess Advantage in Black and White*, Random House Puzzles & Games, 2004, p. 328. ISBN 0-8129-3571-3.
- [4] “UON13 Halloween Edition – Critical lines in the Halloween” (PDF). Chessville.com. Archived from the original (PDF) on October 25, 2012. Retrieved 2013-05-09.
- [5] Jan Pinski, *The Four Knights*, Gloucester Publishers, 2003, p. 181. ISBN 1-85744-311-X.
- [6] Andrew Martin, “Your Chess Questions Answered by Andrew Martin”, Chess.com, 03/09/2009

### 3.20.6 External links

- Leading expert Grigor Minchev player profile and games at Chessgames.com
- Steffen Jakob (© 1996–97). “The Halloween-Attack in the Four Knight Game”. Jakob.at. Retrieved 2013-08-03. Check date values in: |date= (help)
- David Zimbeck (2005-02-01). “The Halloween!”. Zimbeckchess.com. Retrieved 2013-08-01.

- “The Halloween Gambit is Scarier Than You Think” **3...exd4**  
Compulsion to Move (blog), theory and examples
- Chess Opening Explorer Chessgames.com
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nxe5 (60 games)
- “Halloween Gambit” video and explanation, TheChessWebsite.com

## 3.21 Philidor Defence

The **Philidor Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 d6

The opening is named after the famous 18th-century player **François-André Danican Philidor**, who advocated it as an alternative to the common 2...Nc6. His original idea was to challenge White’s centre by the pawn thrust f7–f5.

Today, the Philidor is known as a solid but passive choice for Black, and is seldom seen in top-level play except as an alternative to the heavily analysed openings that can ensue after the normal 2...Nc6.

The ECO code for Philidor Defence is C41.

### 3.21.1 Use

The Philidor occurred in one of the most famous games ever played, the “Opera Box game” played in 1858 between the American chess master **Paul Morphy** and two strong amateurs, the German noble **Duke Karl of Brunswick** and the French aristocrat **Count Isouard**. The game continued 3.d4 Bg4, a deviation from modern standard lines.

As of 2004, there are no top players who employ the Philidor with any regularity, although **Étienne Bacrot** and **Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu** have occasionally experimented with it. Its popularity in master play has increased slightly over the last twenty years, however.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 3.21.2 Lines starting 3.d4

With 3.d4 White immediately challenges Black in the centre. In this position, Black has several options.

The most common Black response is 3...exd4 which relieves the central tension, although it gives up the centre. After 4. **Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3**, Black normally continues ...Be7 and ...0-0 (the **Antoshin Variation**) and achieves a strong defensive position.

In this line Black can also fianchetto his bishop to g7, although this is uncommon. **Bent Larsen** tried this in a few games, including a draw against **Mikhail Tal** in 1969.

Instead of 4.Nxd4, White can also play 4. **Qxd4**, as **Paul Morphy** favoured, intending 4... **Nc6 5. Bb5 Bd7 6. Bxc6 Bxc6 7. Nc3 Nf6 8. Bg5** followed by 0-0-0. This line was played in many 19th-century games.

### Hanham Variation

Black’s aim in the Hanham Variation is a strongpoint defence of e5.

The other main option for Black is to maintain the central tension and adopt a setup with ...Nd7, ...Be7, and ...c6. This plan is named the **Hanham Variation** (after the American chess master **James Moore Hanham**) and was favoured by **Aron Nimzowitsch**. A common line is: 3... **Nf6 4. Nc3 Nbd7 5. Bc4 Be7 6. 0-0** (6.Ng5 is an interesting alternative: after 6...0-0 7.Bxf7+ Rxf7 8.Ne6 Qe8 9.Nxc7 Qd8 10.Nxa8, White is material up, but Black can develop a strong initiative after, for example, 10...b5 11.Nxb5 Qa5+) **6... 0-0 7. a4** (to prevent ...b5) **7... c6** (see diagram).

Grandmaster **Larry Kaufman**, in his book *The Chess Advantage in Black and White*, notes that the Hanham Variation aims to maintain Black’s pawn on e5, analogously to closed lines of the **Ruy Lopez**, and opines that “it would be quite popular and on a par with the major defenses to 1.e4, except for the annoying detail that Black can’t actually reach the Hanham position by force.”<sup>[2]</sup>

As an alternative to 4.Nc3 in response to Black’s 3...Nf6, according to both Kaufman and Grandmaster **Christian Bauer**, White retains some advantage with: 4. **dxe5! Nxe4 5. Qd5! Nc5 6. Bg5 Be7 7. exd6 Qxd6 8. Nc3**.<sup>[3][4]</sup>

### Alternative move order

Black sometimes tries 3... **Nd7** intending 4.Nc3 Ngf6, reaching the Hanham Variation. But then 4. **Bc4!** is awkward for Black to meet, since 4...Ngf6 loses to 5.Ng5, and 4...Be7 loses a pawn to 5.dxe5 Nxe5 (5...dxe5?? 6.Qd5! wins) 6.Nxe5 dxe5 7.Qh5!<sup>[3][5]</sup> So 4... **c6** is best for Black, but leaves White with the advantage of the bishop pair after 5. **0-0 Be7 6. dxe5 dxe5** (6...Nxe5 loses a pawn to 7.Nxe5

dxe5 8.Qh5) 7. Ng5! Bxg5 8. Qh5! Qe7 and now 9.Bxg5 or 9.Qxg5.<sup>[6]</sup>

### Black experiments to reach the Hanham Variation

In recent years, Black has experimented with other move orders in an attempt to reach the Hanham Variation while avoiding 3...Nf6 4.dxe5! and 3...Nd7 4.Bc4!

- One such line is 1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 Nbd7 intending 4.Nf3 e5. However, White can deviate with 4.f4!?<sup>[7][8]</sup> or even 4.g4!?<sup>[9]</sup>
- Another try is 1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 e5 which transposes to the Hanham after 4.Nf3 Nbd7, but White can instead try to gain a small advantage with 4. dxe5 (Kaufman opines that 4.Nge2 is “also promising”) 4... dxe5 5. Qxd8+ Kxd8 6. Bc4.<sup>[8]</sup> After 4.dxe5, Bauer concludes that “White stands a trifle better” but that “provided he plays accurately, Black doesn't have much to fear following 6.Bc4, by choosing any of the three valid replies, 6...Ke8, 6...Bb4, or 6...Be6. Then 7.Bxe6 fxe6 his position remains a hard nut to crack.”<sup>[10]</sup>

### Philidor's original intention: 3...f5

Philidor's original intent 3...f5!?

A more aggressive approach for Black after 3.d4 is 3...f5!? (see diagram), now called the **Philidor Counter Gambit**, a move which Philidor himself recommended. According to Philidor, the move 3...f5 can also be played after 3.Bc4, which can lead to unique positions such as 3.Bc4 f5 4.d3 c6, possibly followed by f5–f4, b7–b5, a7–a5, and even g7–g5 and h7–h5, when all Black pawns have moved before any piece.<sup>[11]</sup>

In the 19th century, 3...f5 was also played by **Paul Morphy**. The move can lead to more open positions than the other lines, but is often considered dubious.<sup>[12][13]</sup> Others maintain that 3...f5 is a valid idea. Grandmaster **Tony Kosten** treats the move with respect in his monograph on the opening.<sup>[14]</sup> The move was also played by **David Bronstein** and by **Teimour Radjabov**.

The main alternatives after 3.d4 f5 are:

- 4. Bc4 after which Black should reply 4... exd4
- 4. Nc3 is also best followed by 4... exd4<sup>[15]</sup>
- 4. dxe5 forces Black to complicate matters further with 4... fxe4

- 4. exf5 e4

All of these lead to a small advantage for White with correct play.

### 3...Bg4?!

Inferior is 3...Bg4?!, in light of 4. dxe5 Bxf3 (alternatively, Black can gambit a pawn with 4...Nd7?!, known as the Duke of Brunswick Gambit) 5. Qxf3 dxe5 6. Bc4 giving White the advantage of the **bishop pair** in an open position. (Now the “natural” 6...Nf6? allows White to win a pawn with 7.Qb3. This was played in the famous “**Opera Box game**”, when **Paul Morphy** as White declined to win the pawn but retained a strong **initiative** after 7...Qe7 8.Nc3.)

### 3.21.3 Line starting 3.Bc4

An alternative approach for White is to play 3.Bc4, and either delay d2–d4, or forgo it altogether and instead play d2–d3. The move 3.Bc4 is also White's route to an attempted **Légal Trap**. The continuation 3...Nc6 brings about the **Semi-Italian Opening**.

### 3.21.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 3.21.5 References

- [1] The Philidor at Chessgames.com
- [2] Kaufman 2004, p. 65.
- [3] Kaufman 2004, p. 69.
- [4] Bauer 2006, p. 32.
- [5] Bauer 2006, p. 16.
- [6] Bauer 2006, pp. 17–22.
- [7] Bauer 2006, p. 179.
- [8] Kaufman 2004, p. 199.
- [9] Bauer 2006, pp. 197–206.
- [10] Bauer 2006, p. 174.
- [11] François André Philidor, *Analyse du jeu des Échecs*, 1749.
- [12] Kaufman 2004, p. 22.
- [13] Bauer 2006, pp. 22–32.

[14] Tony Kosten, *Winning with the Philidor*, Batsford Chess, 1992.

[15] Further recent analysis on this line can be found [here](#).

### Bibliography

- Christian Bauer, *The Philidor Files*, Everyman Chess, 2006. ISBN 1-85744-436-1.
- Larry Kaufman, *The Chess Advantage in Black and White*, McKay Chess Library, 2004. ISBN 0-8129-3571-3.

### 3.21.6 Further reading

- Barsky, Vladimir (2010). *The Modern Philidor Defence*. Chess Stars. ISBN 978-954-8782-77-7.

### 3.21.7 External links

- Opening overview
- Shirov’s 5.g4!? gambit in the Philidor

## 3.22 Elephant Gambit

The **Elephant Gambit** (also called the **Queen’s Pawn Counter Gambit** or **Englund Counterattack**) is a rarely played chess opening beginning with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 d5!?

Although the Elephant Gambit is considered unsound, it has been used frequently by the Barbadian master Philip Corbin.

### 3.22.1 Lines

White is able to capture either of Black’s center pawns with the advantage, either by 3.exd5 or 3.Nxe5. With a center pawn removed, Black is in a passive position with White clearly having the initiative as White controls more space.

#### 3.exd5

Black’s responses to 3.exd5 include 3...e4 and 3...Bd6 (the Elephant Gambit proper). 3...Qxd5 saves the pawn, but leaves White with a big lead in development after 4.Nc3.

**3...e4 4.Qe2 Nf6** A typical line might continue 3...e4 4.Qe2 Nf6 5.d3 Qxd5 6.Nbd2 Be7 7.dxe4 Qe6 and White remains a pawn ahead, although Black’s development is somewhat smoother.

Alternatively, after 4...Nf6:

- 5.d3 Be7 6.dxe4 0-0 7.Nc3 Re8 8.Bd2 Bb4 9.0-0-0, with advantage for White (Nick de Firmian).
- 5.Nc3 Be7 6.Nxe4:
  - 6...Nxd5 7.d3 0-0 8.Qd1 Bg4 9.Be2 f5 10.Ng3 Nc6 11.c3 with slight advantage for White, as in Salomonsson–H. Sorenson, Malmo 1982 (de Firmian).
  - 6...0-0 7.Nxf6+ Bxf6 8.d4 Re8 9.Be3, with distinct superiority for White (de Firmian).

**3...e4 4.Qe2 f5** 3...e4 4.Qe2, Black plays 4...f5 5.d3 Nf6 6.dxe4 fxe4 7.Nc3 Bb4 8.Qb5+ c6 9.Qxb4 exf3 with 10.Bg5 cxd5 11.0-0-0 Nc6 as in Tal–Lutikov, Tallinn 1964 (see de Firmian) with advantage for White.<sup>[1]</sup>

Elephant Gambit proper: 3.exd5 Bd6

**Elephant Gambit proper: 3...Bd6** 3...Bd6 4.d4 e4 5.Ne5 Nf6 6.Nc3 0-0 7.Bc4 and according to de Firmian, White enjoys a distinct superiority but no immediate attack.

#### 3.Nxe5

After 3.Nxe5:

- Black plays 3...Bd6 4.d4 dxe4 5.Bc4 Bxe5 6.Qh5 Qf6 7.dxe5, which is thought to be slightly better for White.
- In Lob–Eliskases, German CC 1929, Black played 3...dxe4. The game continued 4.Bc4 Qg5 5.Bxf7+ Ke7 6.d4 Qxg2 7.Rf1 Bh3 8.Bc4 Nf6 9.Bf4, and White went on to win.
- 3...Qe7? leads to an advantage for White after 4.d4 f6 5.Nd3 dxe4 6.Nf4 Qf7 7.Nd2 (Bondarevsky–Lilienthal, USSR 1941).

#### Other lines

3.d4 can be used to enter some uncommon territory.

### 3.22.2 See also

- List of chess openings

### 3.22.3 References

- [1] The game continuation can be found here: Tal–Lutikov, Tallinn 1964.

### Bibliography

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- Burgess, Graham. *The Mammoth Book of Chess*. London: Constable and Robinson, 2000.
- de Firmian, Nick (1999). *Modern Chess Openings* (14th ed.). New York: David McKay Company Inc. pp. 150–51.

### 3.22.4 External links

- Harding, Tim (August 1997). *The Kibitzer: We're Going On An Elephant Hunt* at ChessCafe.com
- The Elephant Gambit (Over 100 games) at Chess-games.com
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d5 (1850 games)

## 3.23 Damiano Defence

The **Damiano Defence** is a chess opening beginning with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 f6?

The defence is one of the oldest chess openings, with games dating back to the 16th century.

The ECO code for the Damiano Defence is C40 (King’s Knight Opening).

### 3.23.1 3.d4 and 3.Bc4

Black’s 2...f6? is a weak move that exposes Black’s king, weakens Black’s kingside and takes away his knight’s best square. The moves 3.d4 and 3.Bc4 are strong replies; I.A. Horowitz wrote (substituting algebraic notation for his descriptive notation), “Simple and potent is 3.Bc4 d6 4.d4 Nc6 5.c3, after which Black chokes to death.”<sup>[1]</sup>

### 3.23.2 3.Nxe5!

Position after 8...h6. After 9.Bxb7!, 9...Bxb7?? falls into 10.Qf5#.

Most forceful, however, is the knight sacrifice 3.Nxe5!<sup>[2]</sup> Taking the knight with 3...fxe5? exposes Black to a deadly attack after 4.Qh5+ Ke7 (4...g6 loses to 5.Qxe5+, forking king and rook) 5.Qxe5+ Kf7 6.Bc4+ d5! (6...Kg6?? 7.Qf5+ is devastating and leads to mate shortly after) 7.Bxd5+ Kg6 8.h4 (8.d4? Bd6!) h5 (for 8...h6, see diagram) 9.Bxb7! Bd6 (9...Bxb7 10.Qf5+ Kh6 11.d4+ g5 12.Qf7! mates quickly) 10.Qa5!, when Black’s best is 10...Nc6 11.Bxc6 Rb8, and now White will be ahead by several pawns. Bruce Pandolfini notes that Black’s opening is thus sometimes described as “the five pawns gambit”.<sup>[3]</sup> Alternatively, White can continue developing his pieces, remaining four pawns up. In either case, White has a clearly winning position.

Since taking the knight is fatal, after 3.Nxe5 Black should instead play 3...Qe7!<sup>[4]</sup> (Other Black third moves, such as 3...d5, lead to 4. Qh5+! g6 5. Nxe6!) After 4.Nf3 (4.Qh5+? g6 5.Nxe6 Qxe4+ 6.Be2 Qxg6 leaves Black ahead a piece for a pawn)<sup>[4]</sup> Qxe4+ 5.Be2, Black has regained the pawn but has lost time and weakened his kingside, and will lose more time when White chases the queen with Nc3, or 0-0, Re1, and a move by the bishop on e2. Nick de Firmian in *Modern Chess Openings* analyzes instead 4...d5 5.d3 dxe4 6.dxe4, when White had a small advantage in Schiffers–Chigorin, St. Petersburg 1897.<sup>[5]</sup>

The fact that Black can only regain the pawn with 3...Qe7! shows that 2...f6? did not really defend the e-pawn at all. Indeed, even a relatively useless move like 2...a6?! is less risky than 2...f6?. After 2...a6?! 3.Nxe5, Black could still regain the pawn with 3...Qe7 4.d4 d6, without weakening his kingside or depriving the king knight of its best square.

### 3.23.3 History

Position after 10.Ne5!, White wins Black’s queen.

Ironically, the opening is named after the Portuguese master Pedro Damiano (1480–1544), who condemned it as weak. In 1847, Howard Staunton wrote of 2...f6, “This move occurs in the old work of Damiano, who gives some ingenious variations on it. Lopez, and later authors, have hence entitled it ‘Damiano’s Gambit’.”<sup>[6]</sup> Staunton’s contemporary George Walker instead, more logically, reserved the term “Damiano Gambit” for the knight sacrifice played by White on the third move: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f6 3.Nxe5.<sup>[7]</sup> Staunton referred to 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6, a highly respected move then and now, as “Damiano’s defence to the K. Kt.’s opening”.<sup>[8]</sup>

The Damiano Defence is never seen today in top-level play. The greatest player to play the Damiano in serious master competition was Mikhail Chigorin. As noted above, he played the 3...Qe7 line in a game against Emmanuel Schiffers at Saint Petersburg 1897. Chigorin lost his queen on move 10 (see diagram), but Schiffers played so weakly that Chigorin later missed a brilliant forced mate and only escaped when Schiffers agreed to a draw in a winning position.<sup>[9]</sup> Robert McGregor played the Damiano in a 1964 simultaneous exhibition against Bobby Fischer, essaying 3...Qe7 4.Nf3 d5 5.d3 dxe4 6.dxe4 Qxe4+ 7.Be2 Bf5, and drew, although Fischer did not play the best moves.<sup>[10]</sup>

### 3.23.4 References

- [1] I.A. Horowitz, *Chess Openings: Theory and Practice*, Simon and Schuster, 1964, p. 227 n. 31.
- [2] *Understanding the Chess Openings*, Sam Collins, 2005, p. 28.
- [3] Bruce Pandolfini, *Chess Openings: Traps and Zaps*, Simon & Schuster, 1989, p. 92. ISBN 0-671-65690-2.
- [4] Pandolfini 1989, p. 91.
- [5] *Modern Chess Openings, 15th Edition*, Random House Puzzles & Games, 2008, p. 156. ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7.
- [6] Howard Staunton, *The Chess-Player’s Handbook*, Henry C. Bohn, 1847, p. 60.
- [7] Walker wrote of the knight sacrifice, “This constitutes the Damiano Gambit.” George Walker, *The Art of Chess-Play: A New Treatise on the Game of Chess* (4th ed. 1846), Sherwood, Gilbert, & Piper, p. 236.
- [8] Staunton, p. 64.
- [9] “The Richter riddle”. *OPEN CHESS DIARY* (scroll down to No. 222). Retrieved 2006-03-20.
- [10] Bobby Fischer and Damiano’s Defense. Chessstuff.blogspot.com. Retrieved on 2009-04-02.

### 3.23.5 External links

- “Defeating Damiano’s Defense”. The Kenilworthian. 2010-07-28. Retrieved 2012-07-20. A comprehensive list of material available online about Damiano’s Defense.

## 3.24 Greco Defence

The **Greco Defence** (or **McConnell Defense**), named after Gioachino Greco (c. 1600 – c. 1634), is a chess opening beginning with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Qf6

The opening is categorized as ECO code C40.

### 3.24.1 Discussion

Of the several plausible ways Black has to defend his e-pawn, 2...Qf6 is considered one of the weaker choices, since the queen is developed prematurely and can become a target for attack. Also, the black knight on g8 is deprived of its most natural square. There is, however, no obvious refutation of this opening; White’s advantage consists mainly of being able to develop more smoothly.

Although it is a popular opening choice by novice players, it has also been used by players who, according to International Master Gary Lane, “should know better”.

### 3.24.2 Examples

#### Greco line

Greco himself illustrated the following amusing line against this defense in 1620:

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Qf6?! 3. Bc4 Qg6 4. 0-0 Qxe4 5. Bxf7+ Ke7
- 5...Kxf7?? 6.Ng5+ wins the black queen.
6. Re1 Qf4 7. Rxe5+ Kxf7
- 7...Kd8 8.Re8#
8. d4 Qf6 9. Ng5+ Kg6 10. Qd3+ Kh6 11. Nf7# 1–0<sup>[1]</sup>

Morphy vs. McConnell, 1849  
Position after 11.Nxd4

#### McConnell game

Morphy vs. McConnell, New Orleans 1849:<sup>[2]</sup>

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Qf6 3. Nc3 c6 4. d4 exd4
5. e5 Qg6 6. Bd3
- 6.Qxd4! gives White a big lead in development.
- 6... Qxg2 7. Rg1 Qh3 8. Rg3 Qh5 9. Rg5 Qh3
10. Bf1 Qe6 11. Nxd4 (see diagram)
- ... and Morphy was better.

**Busch game**

Paulsen vs. Busch, Düsseldorf 1863:<sup>[3]</sup>

**1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Qf6 3. Bc4 Nh6**

Making some sense, since Black is able to respond ...Qxh6 if White were to play d4 followed by Bxh6.

**4. 0-0 Bc5 5. Nc3 c6 6. d4! Bxd4 7. Nxd4 exd4 8. e5 Qg6 9. Qxd4**

And again, White is ahead in development.

**3.24.3 See also**

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

**3.24.4 References**

- [1] *Opening Lanes* Gary Lane, Chesscafe.com, 2001, last question on the page.
- [2] Benjamin, Joel; Schiller, Eric (1987). "Greco Defence". *Unorthodox Openings*. Macmillan Publishing Company. pp. 91–92. ISBN 0-02-016590-0.
- [3] Schiller, Eric (1998). "McConnell Defense". *Unorthodox Chess Openings*. Cardoza Publishing. p. 287. ISBN 0-940685-73-6.

**3.25 Gunderam Defense**

The **Gunderam Defense**<sup>[1][2]</sup> is a rarely played chess opening starting with the moves:

**1. e4 e5**  
**2. Nf3 Qe7**

It is named after the chess player Gerhard Gunderam.<sup>[3][4]</sup> The Gunderam Defense is categorized under the ECO code C40.

**3.25.1 Overview**

Although 2...Qe7 does answer the threat against Black's e-pawn, it interferes with the development of Black's dark-square bishop. One of the ideas behind this awkward queen move is to unbalance the game by castling queenside while White will presumably castle kingside.

**3.25.2 See also**

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

**3.25.3 Notes**

- [1] Bangor Chess Club
- [2] Chess-Theory.com OPENINGS THEORY - ECO CODES BASE C40
- [3] Bill Wall's list of chess openings
- [4] Chess Archaeology: Openings classified under ECO C40

**3.26 Latvian Gambit**

The **Latvian Gambit** or **Greco Counter Gambit** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

**1. e4 e5**  
**2. Nf3 f5?!**

It is one of the oldest chess openings, having been analysed in the 17th century by **Gioachino Greco**, after whom it is sometimes named. The opening has the appearance of a **King's Gambit** with colours reversed. It is an aggressive but rather dubious choice for Black which often leads to wild and tricky positions.<sup>[1][2]</sup> FIDE Master Dennis Monokrousos even goes so far as to describe it as "possibly the worst opening in chess".<sup>[3]</sup> As assessed by Paul van der Sterren:

What is required to play the Latvian Gambit with any degree of success is a sharp eye for tactics and a mental attitude of total contempt for whatever theory has to say about it.  
— Paul van der Sterren, *Fundamental Chess Openings*

The Latvian is uncommon at the top level of over-the-board play, but some correspondence chess players are devoted to it.<sup>[2][4]</sup>

The ECO code for the Latvian Gambit is C40 (King's Knight Opening).

### 3.26.1 History

The opening was originally known as the **Greco Counter-Gambit**, and some modern writers still refer to it as such.<sup>[5]</sup> That name recognised the Italian player **Gioachino Greco** (1600–34), who contributed to the early theory of the opening. The name *Latvian Gambit* is a tribute to the Latvian players, notably **Kārlis Bētiņš**, who analysed it in the early part of the 20th century.

### 3.26.2 White’s third move

Many responses for **White** have been analyzed.<sup>[6]</sup> The most important of these are:

#### 3.Nxe5

White’s 3.Nxe5 is the main line. After the usual 3...Qf6, White chooses between 4.d4 d6 5.Nc4 fxe4 and the immediate 4.Nc4, which has the advantage of allowing White to open the center with d3, for example 4...fxe4 5.Nc3 Qg6?! 6.d3 exd3? 7.Bxd3 Qxg2? and now White is winning after 8.Qh5+ Kd8 (or 8...g6 9.Qe5+ and 10.Be4) 9.Be4. However, if 6... Bb4, white must be careful following the same line, e.g. 7. Bd2 exd3 8. Bxd3 Qxg2 9. Qh5+ Kd8 10. Be4 Nf6! because now if white plays Bg5, which would be necessary to win the queen in the earlier line, then Bxc3+ wins for black. The main line continues 5...Qf7 6.Ne3! Black usually responds with 6...c6!?, when White can either accept the **pawn sacrifice** with 7.Nxe4 d5 8.Ng5 Qf6 9.Nf3, or decline it with the more popular 7.d3 exd3 8.Bxd3 d5 9.0-0.<sup>[7]</sup> The latter variation has been deeply analyzed; the British **Grandmaster Anthony Kosten** analyzes one line to move 32.<sup>[8]</sup> One line discussed by **International Master Jeremy Silman** is 9...Bc5 10.Na4 Bd6 11.c4 d4 12.Nc2 c5 13.b4 Ne7 14.Nxc5 Bxc5 15.bxc5 Nbc6 16.Bb2 0-0 17.Nxd4 Nxd4 18.Bxd4 Bf5 19.Bxf5 Nxf5 20.Be3 Qxc4 21.Qb3 Nxe3!? 22.fxe3 Rxf1+ 23.Rxf1 Qxb3 24.axb3 Rc8 25.Rf5 and now 25...Rd8 or 25...Rc6 gives Black an excellent chance to **draw the pawn-down endgame**.<sup>[9]</sup> Silman later argued that 10.b4!! and now 10...Bxb4 11.Ncxd5 cxd5 12.Nxd5 or 10...Bd6 11.Re1! Ne7 12.Nexd5 cxd5 13.Nb5 is close to winning for White, and that the “old, discredited” 9...Bd6 (rather than 9...Bc5) might be Black’s best try, though still insufficient for **equality**.<sup>[10]</sup>

Also possible is the eccentric 3...Nc6?!, against which **John Nunn** recommends 4.d4.<sup>[11]</sup> After 4.d4, Kosten analyzes 4...Qf6!? 5.Nc3 Bb4 6.exf5! Nxe5 7.Qe2.<sup>[12]</sup> Instead of 4.d4, Kosten says that White can accept the proffered rook with 4.Qh5+ g6 5.Nxg6 Nf6 6.Qh3 hxc6 7.Qxh8 Qe7 (7...fxe4? 8.d4! is strong) 8.d3! (Stefan Bucker gives an alternative 8.Nc3! Nb4 9.d3 as also winning for White)<sup>[13]</sup>

8...fxe4 9.Be3 d5 10.Bc5! Qxc5 11.Qxf6 Bf5 12.dxe4 Nd4 13.exf5! Nxc2+ 14.Kd1 Nxa1 15.Bd3 Qd6 16.Re1+ Kd7 17.Qf7+ Be7 18.Re6 winning.<sup>[14]</sup>

#### 3.Bc4

White’s 3.Bc4 may lead to perhaps the most notorious and heavily analysed line of the Latvian, which begins 3...fxe4 4.Nxe5 Qg5 5.d4 Qxg2 6.Qh5+ g6 7.Bf7+ Kd8 8.Bxg6! Qxh1+ 9.Ke2 Qxc1 (9...c6 is a major alternative) 10.Nf7+ Ke8 11.Nxh8+ hxc6 12.Qxg6+ Kd8 13.Nf7+ Ke7 14.Nc3!<sup>[15]</sup>

However, instead of 4...Qg5, “nowadays players often give preference to 4...d5”, the **Svedenborg Variation**.<sup>[16]</sup> According to Latvian Gambit experts Kon Grivainis and John Elburg, Black wins more often than White in this line.<sup>[17]</sup> After 4...d5 5.Qh5+ g6 6.Nxg6, Black chooses between 6...Nf6 and 6...hxc6. 6...Nf6 usually leads, after 7.Qe5+ Be7 8.Bb5+! c6 9.Nxe7 Qxe7 10.Qxe7+ Kxe7 11.Be2 (11.Bf1!?), to an endgame where Black is a pawn down but has considerable positional compensation.<sup>[18]</sup> Sharper is 6...hxc6, when 7.Qxh8 Kf7 9.Qd4 Be6 gives White a large **material** advantage, but his “position is constantly on the edge of a precipice”, and the line has accordingly fallen out of favor.<sup>[19]</sup> More often, White plays 7.Qxg6+ Kd7 8.Bxd5 Nf6, leading to sharp and unclear play.<sup>[20]</sup>

#### 3.Nc3

White’s 3.Nc3 was originally analyzed by the American master **Stasch Mlotkowski** (1881–1943) in the 1916 *British Chess Magazine*.<sup>[21]</sup> Kosten gives as Black’s two main responses 3...Nf6 4.Bc4 (4.exf5 is also possible) fxe4 5.Nxe5 d5 6.Nxd5! Nxd5 7.Qh5+ g6 8.Nxg6! hxc6! 9.Qxg6+ Kd7 10.Bxd5 Qe7 11.Qxe4 Rh4 12.Qxe7+ Bxe7, reaching an **endgame** where White has four pawns for a **minor piece**, and 4...fxe4 5.Nxe5 Qf6, when White can choose from 6.Nc4! (transposing to the main line 3.Nxe5 Qf6 4.Nc4 fxe4 6.Nc3), 6.d4, and 6.f4!?<sup>[22]</sup> Black can also play 3...d6, when 4.d4 transposes to the **Philidor Counter-Attack** (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 f5!?), which was favored by **Paul Morphy** in the mid-19th century and is still seen occasionally today.<sup>[21][23]</sup>

#### 3.exf5

White’s 3.exf5 followed by e4 4.Ne5 Nf6 5.Be2 is recommended by **John L. Watson** and **Eric Schiller**.<sup>[24]</sup> 4.Qe2, 4.Nd4, and even 4.Ng1!? (leading to a sort of King’s Gambit with colours reversed) are also possible.<sup>[25]</sup>

**3.d4**

White's 3.d4 followed by fxe4 4.Nxe5 Nf6 5.Bg5 d6 leads, as usual, to sharp play. White often offers a piece sacrifice with either 6.Nc3!? or 6.Nd2!?, but Black seems to have adequate resources against both.<sup>[26]</sup>

**3.26.3 See also**

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

**3.26.4 References**

- [1] John Nunn, Graham Burgess, John Emms, and Joe Gallagher, *Nunn's Chess Openings*, Everyman Chess, 1999, p. 285. ISBN 1-85744-221-0.
- [2] Nick de Firmian, *Modern Chess Openings, 15th edition*, Random House Puzzles & Games, 2008, p. 144. ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7.
- [3] Dennis Monokroussos, *One man's trash is another man's treasure*, ChessBase, 8 November 2007
- [4] Latvian Gambit analyzed by correspondence chess players, Wikichess.
- [5] Larry Evans, *The Chess Opening for You*, RHM Press, 1975, p. 29. ISBN 0-89058-020-0.
- [6] Tony Kosten, *The Latvian Gambit Lives!*, Batsford, 2001, pp. 7, 117, 175, 199, 210, 217. ISBN 0-7134-8629-5. The responses not mentioned in this article are 3.d3, 3.b4?!, 3.c4!?, 3.Qe2!?, 3.b3?!, and 3.g4? None of those moves offer White any advantage. *Id.* at 217.
- [7] Kosten 2001, pp. 78-79, 83-84.
- [8] Kosten 2001, p. 96.
- [9] Jeremy Silman, *Two Wild Black Systems*. Jeremysilman.com. Retrieved on 2009-06-11.
- [10] *More Splat the Lat*. Jeremysilman.com. Retrieved on 2006-06-11.
- [11] Nunn, Burgess, Emms & Gallagher 1999, p. 297.
- [12] Kosten 2001, p. 112.
- [13] *Lower Life in the Latvian Gambit Part 1*. Retrieved on 2010-05-09.
- [14] Kosten 2001, pp. 107-12.
- [15] Kosten 2001, pp. 124-39. Kosten calls 4...Qg5 "probably one of the sharpest and most extensively analyzed opening variations of all." *Id.* at 117.

[16] Kosten 2001, p. 117.

[17] Kon Grivainis and John Elburg, *New Developments in the Latvian Gambit*, Chess Enterprises, 1998, p. 6. ISBN 0-945470-69-X.

[18] Kosten 2001, pp. 159-64.

[19] Kosten 2001, p. 151.

[20] Kosten 2001, pp. 140-50.

[21] Kosten 2001, p. 210.

[22] Kosten 2001, pp. 213-14.

[23] Christian Bauer, *The Philidor Files*, Gloucester Publishers, 2006, pp. 22-32. ISBN 978-1-85744-436-0.

[24] *Latvian Gambit*. jeremysilman.com. Retrieved on 2009-04-05.

[25] Kosten 2001, pp. 188-98.

[26] Kosten 2001, pp. 199-209.

**3.26.5 External links**

- Le gambit letton (French)
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 (6177 games)

**3.27 Rousseau Gambit**

The **Rousseau Gambit** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 f5

The gambit is named after Eugène Rousseau. White can decline the gambit by supporting the e-pawn with 4.d3. The resulting position is similar to a King's Gambit Declined with colours reversed, and White's king bishop aiming at Black's weakened kingside. Black will have trouble castling kingside and Ng5 is a likely threat. White's position is better, but still requires careful play.

Key themes for White are to attack Black's kingside and to avoid attempts by Black to simplify the position. Exchanges involving White's light-square bishop are particularly suspect.

### 3.27.1 White responses

#### Gambit Declined: 4.d3

White can decline the gambit and to wait to capture the f-pawn.

#### Gambit Accepted: 4.exf5

White still has a good game after the inferior 4.exf5, but the position is less clear. Black usually plays 4...e4, which White may meet by 5.Nd4! Nf6 (5...Nxd4? leads to trouble after 6.Qh5+) 6.Nxc6.

After 4.d4

#### 4.d4!

White gets a clear advantage with 4.d4!:

- 4...fxe4 5.Nxe5 d5 6.Bb5 Ne7 7.0-0 a6 8.Bxc6+ bxc6 (8...Nxc6? 9.Qh5+) 9.f3 Bf5 10.Nc3 +/- (Bilguer *Handbuch*).<sup>[1][2]</sup>
- 4...d6 and now:
  - 5.Ng5 Nh6 6.d5 Nb8 (6...Ne7 7.Nc3 f4 8.g3 Ng6 9.Bb5+ +/-; Maróczy) 7.Nc3 f4 8.h4 Bg4 9.f3 Bd7 10.g3 fxg3 11.f4 +/- (Sozin).
  - 5.dxe5 and now:
    - 5...fxe4 6.Qd5 Qe7 7.Bg5 Be6 8.Qxe4 +/- de Rivière–Anderssen, London 1862.<sup>[1]</sup>
    - 5...dxe5 6.Qxd8+ Nxd8 (6...Kxd8 7.Bg5+ Nf6 8.Nc3 +/- Morphy–Worrall, London 1859) 7.Nxe5 fxe4 8.Bd2 Bd6 9.Bc3 +/- Löwenthal & Medley vs Morphy & Mongredien, London 1857.<sup>[1]</sup>
- 4...Nf6 5.dxe5 Nxe4 6.0-0 Bc5 7.Nc3 Nxc3 8.bxc3 h6 9.Nd4 g6 10.Nb3 +/- (Bilguer).<sup>[1]</sup>

### 3.27.2 See also

- Latvian Gambit
- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 3.27.3 References

- [1] T. D. Harding; G. S. Botterill (1977), *The Italian Game*, B. T. Batsford Limited, p. 128, ISBN 0-7134-3261-6 Cite uses deprecated parameter `lcoauthors=` (help)
- [2] Kasparov, Gary; Keene, Raymond (1982), *Batsford Chess Openings*, American Chess Promotions, p. 308, ISBN 0-7134-2112-6

### 3.27.4 External links

- Tim McGrew (2002-07-01). “Giuoco Fortissimo: The Rousseau Gambit Part 1” (PDF). Chesscafe.com.
- Tim McGrew (2002-07-30). “Giuoco Fortissimo: The Rousseau Gambit Part 2” (PDF). Chesscafe.com.
- Tim McGrew (2003-09-22). “Gambits In Many Dimensions” (PDF). Chesscafe.com.

## 3.28 Petrov’s Defence

**Petrov’s Defence** (also called **Petroff’s Defence**, **Russian Game** and **Russian Defence**) is a chess opening characterised by the following moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nf6

Though this symmetrical response has a long history, it was first popularised by Alexander Petrov, a Russian chess player of the mid-19th century. In recognition of the early investigations by the Russian masters Petrov and Carl Jaenisch, this opening is called the Russian Game in some countries.

The Petrov has a reputation of being dull and uninspired. However, it offers attacking opportunities for both sides, and a few lines are quite sharp. Often a trade occurs and Black, after gaining a tempo, has a well-placed knight. Pillsbury’s game in 1895<sup>[1]</sup> against Emanuel Lasker testifies to this. The Black counterattack in the centre also avoids the Ruy Lopez, Giuoco Piano (and other lines of the Italian Game), and the Scotch Game. Grandmasters Karpov, Yusupov, Smyslov, Marshall, Kramnik, and Pillsbury have frequently played the Petrov as Black.

The ECO codes for Petrov’s Defence are C43 (for 3.d4) and C42 (for all other lines).<sup>[2]</sup>

### 3.28.1 White’s third move

White has four main choices for his third move:

- **3.Nc3**, which may transpose to the **Four Knights Game** or the **Three Knights Game**
- **3.Bc4**, which may lead to the **Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit** or transpose to the **Two Knights Defence**
- **3.Nxe5**, the **Classical variation**
- **3.d4**, the **Steinitz Variation**

White usually prefers 3.Nxe5, 3.Nc3, or 3.d4.

### 3.Nc3

After 3.Nc3

After 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Nc3 (the **Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit**)

3.Nc3 is the *Three Knights Game* of Petrov's Defense. It is also reached by 2...Nf6 3.Nf3 from the **Vienna Game**. Commonly, with move 3...Nc6, it transposes to the **Four Knights Game**. With move 3...Bb4 (or some others), Black can enter the **Petrov's Three Knights Game** proper.

### 3.Bc4

3.Bc4 is the *Italian Variation* of Petrov's Defense. With move 3...Nc6, it transposes to the **Two Knights Defence**.

**Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit** Another possibility is 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Nc3, the **Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit**. It is not considered wholly sound, since Black has several viable options. He can accept the gambit with 4...Nxc3 5.dxc3 f6, although he must play carefully after 6.0-0 (for example 6...Bc5?? 7.Nxe5! is disastrous; 6...d6 and 6...Nc6 are good). Another, more aggressive try is 6.Nh4, where White goes for a quick assault on Black's king, but Black can maintain a small advantage if he plays cautiously via 6...g6 7.f4 Qe7 8.f5 Qg7 9.Qg4 Kd8. Another possibility is returning the gambit pawn with 4...Nxc3 5.dxc3 c6 6.Nxe5 d5, which equalises. A third possibility is transposing to the **Italian Four Knights Game** with 4...Nc6, and if 5.Nxe4, d5. If 5.Bxf7+?, Kxf7 6.Nxe4 d5 gives Black the bishop pair and control of the center. If 5.0-0, Black plays 5...Nxc3 6.dxc3 and now Black can play 6...Qe7!, after which Fischer wrote that "White has no compensation for the Pawn",<sup>[3]</sup> or 6...f6 transposing to the main line of the **Boden–Kieseritzky**. Black also has lines beginning 6...Be7 and 6...h6.

### 3.Nxe5

After 3.Nxe5, Black should not continue to copy White's moves and try to restore the material balance immediately

with 3...Nxe4? because after 4.Qe2 White will either win material (4...Nf6?? 5.Nc6+ wins Black's queen, and after 4...d5 5.d3 Qe7 6.dxe4 Qxe5 7.exd5 Black loses a pawn), or obtain a superior position (4...Qe7 5.Qxe4 d6 6.d4 f6 7.Nc3 dxe5 8.Nd5 Qd6 9.Bf4 Nd7 10.0-0-0 and White has a big advantage). Black usually plays 3...d6 (although 3...Qe7 is also possible). White now must retreat the knight, or sacrifice it.

After 3.Nxe5 d6

- 4.Nf3, the **Main Line**
- 4.Nc4, **Paulsen's Variation**
- 4.Nd3, **Karklin's Attack**
- 4.Nxf7, **Cochrane Gambit**

More often, White follows the main line 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.d4 (5.Bd3!? is also playable) d5 6.Bd3, where he will try to drive Black's advanced knight from e4 with moves like c4 and Re1. White can instead force simplification with Lasker's 5.Qe2 Qe7 6.d3. This is generally only good enough for a draw, which Black should be satisfied with. Another possibility, explored by Keres, is 5.c4, known as the **Kauffmann Attack**.

A completely different approach is to meet 4...Nxe4 with 5.Nc3 Nxc3 6.dxc3, with rapid development and queenside castling. For instance, White can plan a quick Be3, Qd2, and 0-0-0, and play for a kingside attack, trusting that his doubled c-pawns will help protect his king, and that his initiative and attacking potential will offset the long term disadvantage of having doubled pawns. In the 5.Nc3 line, Black must avoid 5...Bf5?? 6.Qe2! which wins a piece due to the pin (if 6...Qe7 7.Nd5). Viswanathan Anand resigned after only six moves after falling for this against Alonso Zapata at Biel in 1988.<sup>[4]</sup>

The **Cochrane Gambit**, 4.Nxf7, is labeled "speculative but entertaining" by Nick de Firmian. In *Modern Chess Openings–14* he evaluates the position in Veselin Topalov vs. Vladimir Kramnik, Linares 1999, as offering chances for both sides after 4...Kxf7 5.Nc3 c5!? 6.Bc4+ Be6 7.Bxe6+ Kxe6 8.d4 Kf7 9.dxc5 Nc6.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 3.d4

Wilhelm Steinitz favoured 3.d4. Black can capture either white pawn. After 3...exd4 4.e5 (4.Bc4 transposes into the **Bishop's Opening**) Ne4 5.Qxd4 d5 6.exd6 Nxd6 7.Nc3 Nc6 8.Qf4 the game is approximately equal. After the other capture, 3...Nxe4, 4.Bd3 d5 (amazingly, 4...Nc6!? 5.Bxe4 d5, intending 6.Bd3 e4, is also possible) 5.Nxe5, either 5...Nd7 or 5...Bd6 gives roughly equal chances.

### 3.28.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 3.28.3 Notes

- [1] Lasker vs Pillsbury, 1895, 0–1 <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1109091>
- [2] • “ECO Code by Chess Informant”. [www.chessinformant.rs](http://www.chessinformant.rs). Chess Informant. Retrieved 29 January 2015.
- [3] Bobby Fischer, *My 60 Memorable Games*, Faber and Faber, 1972, pp. 280–81. ISBN 0-571-09987-4.
- [4] “Alonso Zapata vs Viswanathan Anand”. ChessGames.com. Retrieved 13 June 2011.
- [5] De Firmian, Nick (1999), *Modern Chess Openings* (14th ed.), Random House, ISBN 0-8129-3084-3

### 3.28.4 References

- “Petrov Defense (C42)”. *Chess openings*. Chess-games.com. Retrieved 2007-04-26.
- ICC free vids with the Petroff, Najditsch–Kramnik (Dortmund 2008) here Kramnik was defeated with a novelty in a 5.Nc3 line
- ICC free vids with the Petroff, Karjakin–Jakovenko (Aerosvit 2008)
- ICC free vids with the Petroff, Anand–Kramnik (Corus 2008)
- ICC free vids with the Petroff, Ivanchuk–Kramnik (Tal Memorial 2007)
- ICC free vids with the Petroff, Anand–Kramnik (Mexico 2007)

### 3.28.5 Further reading

- Raetsky, Alexander; Chetverik, Maxim (2005). “Petroff Defence”. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-378-0.
- Kotronias, Vassilios; Tzermiadianos, Andreas (2005). *Beating The Petroff*. Batsford. ISBN 978-0-7134-8919-4.

### 3.28.6 External links

- Petrov’s Defence Video and explanation
- Petrov’s defence (C42) – 365Chess.com ECO Games
- The Cochrane Gambit – C42

## Chapter 4

# e4 Openings – Sicilian Defence

### 4.1 Sicilian Defence

The **Sicilian Defence** is a **chess opening** that begins with these moves:

1. e4 c5

The Sicilian is the most popular and best-scoring response to White's first move 1.e4. 1.d4 is a statistically more successful opening for white due to the high success rate of the Sicilian defence against 1.e4.<sup>[1]</sup> *New In Chess* stated in its 2000 Yearbook that of the **games** in its **database**, White scored 56.1% in 296,200 games beginning 1.d4, but 54.1% in 349,855 games beginning 1.e4, mainly due to the Sicilian, which held White to a 52.3% score in 145,996 games.<sup>[2]</sup>

17% of all games between **grandmasters**, and 25% of the games in the **Chess Informant** database, begin with the Sicilian.<sup>[3]</sup> Almost one quarter of all games use the Sicilian Defence.<sup>[4]</sup>

**Grandmaster John Nunn** attributes the Sicilian Defence's popularity to "its combative nature; in many lines Black is playing not just for equality, but for the advantage. The drawback is that White often obtains an early initiative, so Black has to take care not to fall victim to a quick attack."<sup>[5]</sup> **Grandmaster Jonathan Rowson** considered why the Sicilian is the most successful response to 1.e4, even though 1...c5 develops no pieces, and the pawn on c5 controls only d4 and b4. Rowson writes:

To my mind there is quite a straightforward explanation. In order to profit from the initiative granted by the first move, White has to make use of his opportunity to do something before Black has an equal number of opportunities of his own. However, to do this, he has to make 'contact' with the black position. The first point of contact usually comes in the form of a pawn exchange, which leads to the opening of the position. ...

So the thought behind 1...c5 is this: "OK, I'll let you open the position, and develop your pieces aggressively, but at a price – you have to give me one of your center pawns."

— **Jonathan Rowson**, *Chess for Zebras: Thinking Differently About Black and White*<sup>[6]</sup>

The earliest recorded notes on the Sicilian Defence date back to the late 16th century by the Italian chess players **Giulio Polerio** and **Gioachino Greco**.<sup>[7][8]</sup>

#### 4.1.1 General concepts

By advancing the **c-pawn** two squares, Black asserts control over the d4-square and begins the fight for the **centre of the board**. The move resembles 1...e5, the next most common response to 1.e4, in that respect. Unlike 1...e5, however, 1...c5 breaks the symmetry of the position, which strongly influences both players' future actions. White, having pushed a **kingside** pawn, tends to hold the **initiative** on that side of the board. Moreover, 1...c5 does little for Black's development, unlike moves such as 1...e5, 1...g6, or 1...Nc6, which either develop a minor piece or prepare to do so. In many variations of the Sicilian, Black makes a number of further pawn moves in the opening (for example, ...d6, ...e6, ...a6, and ...b5). Consequently, White often obtains a substantial lead in development and dangerous attacking chances.

Meanwhile, advancing a **queenside** pawn has given Black a **spatial advantage** there and provides a basis for future operations on that flank. Often, Black's c5-pawn is traded for White's d4-pawn in the early stages of the game, granting Black a central pawn majority. The pawn trade also opens the c-file for Black, who can place a rook or queen on that file to aid their queenside **counterplay**.

### 4.1.2 History

The Sicilian Defence was analysed by **Giulio Polerio** in his 1594 manuscript on chess,<sup>[9]</sup> though he did not use the term “Sicilian Defence”.<sup>[10]</sup> It was later the subject of analyses by leading players of the day **Alessandro Salvio** (1604), **Don Pietro Carrera** (c. 1617), and **Gioachino Greco** (1623), and later **Comte Carlo Francesco Cozio** (c. 1740). The great French player and theoretician **André Danican Philidor** opined of the Sicilian in 1777, “This way of opening the game ... is absolutely defensive, and very far from being the best ... but it is a very good one to try the strength of an adversary with whose skill you are unacquainted.”<sup>[11]</sup>

In 1813, the English master **Jacob Henry Sarratt** effectively standardised his English translation of the name of this opening as “the Sicilian Defence”, referring to an old Italian manuscript that used the phrase, “il gioco siciliano” (“The Sicilian Game”).<sup>[12]</sup> The Sicilian was fairly popular for much of the nineteenth century; **Louis-Charles Mahé de La Bourdonnais**, **Adolf Anderssen**, **Howard Staunton**, **Louis Paulsen**, and **Carl Jaenisch** all played it with some consistency. In the ninth edition of *Modern Chess Openings*, **Walter Korn** noted that the Sicilian “received three of its earliest practical tests, and a big boost in popularity, in the 1834 **MacDonnell** [sic]–**La Bourdonnais** match, 1843 **Staunton**–**St. Amant** match, and the 1851 **London Tournament**.”<sup>[13]</sup> **Staunton** wrote of the Sicilian, “In the opinion of **Jaenisch** and the German ‘*Handbuch*’, with which I coincide, this is the best possible reply to 1.P-K4, [1.e4 in algebraic notation] ‘as it renders the formation of a centre impracticable for White and prevents every attack.’”<sup>[14]</sup>

The opening fell out of favour in the later part of the nineteenth century, when some of the world’s leading players rejected it.<sup>[upper-alpha 1]</sup> **Paul Morphy**, the world’s best player in the late 1850s, decried “that pernicious fondness for the Sicilian Defense ... extending from about 1843 to some time after 1851”.<sup>[15]</sup> **Wilhelm Steinitz**, the first **World Champion**, also disliked the Sicilian and rejected it in favour of 1...e5.<sup>[upper-alpha 2]</sup><sup>[16]</sup> The death of the opening’s two greatest proponents, **Staunton** and **Anderssen**, in 1874 and 1879 respectively, also contributed to its decline. It has been said that “these losses almost dealt a knockout blow to the Sicilian because it took a long time to find such important figures to carry the Sicilian’s standard.”<sup>[17]</sup> **George H. D. Gossip**, in *The Chess Player’s Manual*, first published in 1874, wrote, “Of late years ... discoveries have been made which have the effect of considerably strengthening White’s attack, and the ‘Sicilian’ is now considered by most modern authorities to be a comparatively weak mode of play.”<sup>[18]</sup> **Freeborough** and **Ranken**, in their treatise *Chess Openings: Ancient and Modern* (1889, 1896), wrote that the Sicilian “had at one time the reputation of being the best reply to 1.P-K4, but

this has not been confirmed by popular practice. Several eminent players have, however, held to the opinion that it is quite trustworthy.”<sup>[19]</sup><sup>[20]</sup>

The Sicilian continued to be shunned by most leading players at the start of the twentieth century, as 1...e5 held centre stage. **Capablanca**, **World Champion** from 1921 to 1927, famously denounced it as an opening where “Black’s game is full of holes”.<sup>[21]</sup> Similarly, **James Mason** wrote, “Fairly tried and found wanting, the Sicilian has now scarcely any standing as a first-class defence. ... [It] is too defensive. There are too many holes created in the Pawn line. Command of the field, especially in the centre, is too readily given over to the invading force.”<sup>[22]</sup> **Siegbert Tarrasch** wrote that 1...c5 “is certainly not strictly correct, for it does nothing toward development and merely attempts to render difficult the building up of a centre by the first player. ... [T]he Sicilian Defence is excellent for a strong player who is prepared to take risks to force a win against an inferior opponent. Against best play, however, it is bound to fail.”<sup>[23]</sup> The Sicilian was not seen even once in the 75 games played at the great **St. Petersburg 1914 tournament**.<sup>[24]</sup>

Nonetheless, some leading players, such as **Emanuel Lasker** (**World Champion** from 1894 to 1921), **Frank Marshall**, **Savielly Tartakower**, and **Aron Nimzowitsch**, and later **Max Euwe** (**World Champion** from 1935 to 1937) played the Sicilian.<sup>[25]</sup> Even **Capablanca**<sup>[26]</sup><sup>[27]</sup> and **Tarrasch**,<sup>[28]</sup> despite their critical comments, occasionally played the opening. It was played six times (out of 110 games) at **New York 1924**.<sup>[29]</sup> The following year, the authors of *Modern Chess Openings* (4th edition) wrote, “The Sicilian has claims to be considered as the best of the irregular defences to 1.P-K4 at Black’s disposal, and has been practised with satisfactory results by the leading players of the day.”<sup>[upper-alpha 3]</sup> In this period Black’s approach was usually slow and positional, and the all-out attacks by White that became common after **World War II** had not yet been developed.<sup>[30]</sup>

The fortunes of the Sicilian were further revived in the 1940s and 1950s by players such as **Isaac Boleslavsky**, **Alexander Kotov**, and **Miguel Najdorf**. **Reuben Fine**, one of the world’s leading players during this time period, wrote of the Sicilian in 1948, “Black gives up control of the centre, neglects his development, and often submits to horribly cramped positions. How can it be good? Yet, the brilliant wins by White are matched by equally brilliant wins by Black; time and again the Black structure has been able to take everything and come back for more.”<sup>[upper-alpha 4]</sup> Later, **Bent Larsen**, **Ljubomir Ljubojević**, **Lev Polugaevsky**, **Leonid Stein**, **Mark Taimanov**, and **Mikhail Tal** all made extensive contributions to the theory and practice of the defence. Through the efforts of world champions **Bobby Fischer** and **Garry Kasparov**, the Sicilian Defence became recognised as the defence that offered Black the most winning chances against 1.e4. Both play-

ers favoured sharp, aggressive play and employed the Sicilian almost exclusively throughout their careers, burnishing the defence's present reputation. Today, most leading grandmasters include the Sicilian in their opening repertoire. Some of the current top-level players who regularly use it include **Peter Leko**, **Viswanathan Anand**, **Boris Gelfand**, **Vassily Ivanchuk**, **Alexei Shirov**, **Peter Svidler**, and **Veselin Topalov**. In 1990, the authors of *Modern Chess Openings* (13th edition) noted that "in the twentieth century the Sicilian has become the most played and most analysed opening at both the club and master levels."<sup>[31]</sup> In 1965, in the tenth edition of that book, grandmaster **Larry Evans** observed that, "The Sicilian is Black's most dynamic, asymmetrical reply to 1.P-K4. It produces the psychological and tension factors which denote the best in modern play and gives notice of a fierce fight on the very first move."<sup>[32]</sup>

### 4.1.3 Open Sicilian: 2.Nf3 and 3.d4

Over 75% of games beginning with 1.e4 c5 continue with 2.Nf3, when there are three main options for Black: 2...d6, 2...Nc6, and 2...e6. Lines where White then plays 3.d4 are collectively known as the **Open Sicilian**, and result in extremely complex positions. White has a lead in development and extra kingside space, which White can use to begin a kingside attack. This is counterbalanced by Black's central pawn majority, created by the trade of White's d-pawn for Black's c-pawn, and the open c-file, which Black uses to generate queenside counterplay.

#### 2...d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3

Position after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3

Black's most common move after 2.Nf3 is 2...d6. This prepares ...Nf6 to attack the e-pawn without letting White push it to e5. The game usually continues 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3. Sometimes played is 3...Nf6 4.Nc3 cxd4 5.Nxd4 giving the same result. Black can then choose between four major variations: in order of decreasing popularity, these are the **Najdorf** (5...a6), **Dragon** (5...g6), **Classical** (5...Nc6), and **Scheveningen** (5...e6). The **Venice Attack** (5...e5 6.Bb5+) and **Kupreichik Variation** (5...Bd7) are rarely played. 5...e5 is often considered something of an error on Black's part and 5...Bd7 can transpose to one of the more common variations, such as the Classical or Dragon, but there are also a number of independent lines.

There are a few ways for either side to deviate from the moves given above. After 3...cxd4, White occasionally plays 4.Qxd4, the **Chekhov Variation**, intending to meet 4...Nc6 with 5.Bb5 Bd7 6.Bxc6, when White hopes that

their lead in development compensates for Black's bishop pair. Black can avoid this line by playing 3...Nf6, when 4.Nc3 cxd4 5.Nxd4 returns to main lines. However, White has the option of 4.dxc5!?, when Black can play either 4...Nxe4 or 4...Qa5+. Another unusual sideline is 3...cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.f3!?, the **Prins Variation**, which tries to maintain the option of c4 with a **Maróczy Bind** formation.

**Najdorf Variation: 5...a6** Najdorf Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6  
Main article: **Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation**

The **Najdorf Variation** is Black's most popular system in the Sicilian Defence. **Najdorf's** intention with 5...a6 was to prepare ...e5 on the next move to gain space in the centre; the immediate 5...e5?! however is met by 6.Bb5+!, when Black must either play 6...Bd7 or 6...Nbd7. The former allows White to exchange off Black's light-squared bishop, after which the d5-square becomes very weak; but the latter allows 7.Nf5, when Black can only save the d-pawn by playing the awkward 7...a6 8.Bxd7+ Qxd7. In both cases, White's game is preferable.

Thus, by playing 5...a6, Black deprives White of the check on b5, so that ...e5 might be possible next move. In general, 5...a6 also prevents White's knights from using the b5-square, and helps Black create queenside play by preparing the ...b5 pawn push. This plan of 5...a6 followed by ...e5 represents Black's traditional approach in the Najdorf Variation. Later, **Garry Kasparov** also adopted the 5...a6 move order, but with the idea of playing ...e6 rather than ...e5. Kasparov's point is that the immediate 5...e6 (the Scheveningen Variation, discussed below) allows 6.g4, which is White's most dangerous line against the Scheveningen. By playing 5...a6 first, Black temporarily prevents White's g4 thrust and waits to see what White plays instead. Often, play will eventually transpose to the Scheveningen Variation.

Currently, White's most popular weapon against the Najdorf is 6.Be3. This is called the **English Attack**, because it was popularised by English grandmasters **Murray Chandler**, **John Nunn** and **Nigel Short** in the 1980s. White's idea is to play f3, Qd2, g4 and 0-0-0 in some order. Black can respond with 6...e6, 6...e5 or 6...Ng4; to prevent ...Ng4, White sometimes starts with 6.f3 instead, but this allows 6...Qb6! A related attacking idea for White is 6.Be3 e6 7.g4, known as the **Hungarian Attack** or **Perenyi Attack**.

Formerly, 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 was the main line of the Najdorf, when White threatens to attack the pinned knight with 8.e5. Black can simply break the pin with 7...Be7, when White usually plays 8.Qf3 and 9.0-0-0. Some of Black's alternatives are 7...Qb6, the **Poisoned Pawn Variation** popularized by **Fischer**, and 7...b5, the **Polugaevsky Variation**, which

has the tactical point 8.e5 dxe5 9.fxe5 Qc7! 10.exf6 Qe5+ winning the bishop in return for the knight.

White has other choices on the sixth move. 6.Be2 prepares to castle kingside and is a quieter alternative compared to 6.Be3 and 6.Bg5. **Efim Geller** was an early proponent of this move, after which Black can stay in “pure” Najdorf territory with 6...e5 or transpose to the Scheveningen with 6...e6. Other possibilities for White include 6.f4, 6.Bc4 (the **Fischer–Sozin Attack**), 6.g3, and 6.h3, (the **Adams Attack**, named after **Weaver Adams**), which was used several times by **Bobby Fischer**.

**Dragon Variation: 5...g6** Dragon Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6  
Main article: [Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation](#)

In the Dragon Variation, Black fianchettoes a Bishop on the h8–a1 diagonal. It was named by **Fyodor Dus–Chotimirsky** in 1901, who noticed a resemblance between Black’s kingside pawn structure (pawns on d6, e7, f7, g6 and h7) and the stars of the **Draco constellation**.<sup>[33]</sup> White’s most dangerous try against the Dragon is the **Yugoslav Attack**, characterised by 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 0-0 8.Qd2 Nc6, when both 9.0-0-0 and 9.Bc4 may be played. This variation leads to extremely sharp play and is ferociously complicated, since the players castle on opposite wings and the game becomes a race between White’s kingside attack and Black’s queenside counterattack. White’s main alternatives to the Yugoslav Attack are 6.Be2, the Classical Variation, and 6.f4, the Levenfish Attack.

**Classical Variation: 5...Nc6** Classical Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6

This variation can arise from two different move orders: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6, or 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6. Black simply brings their knight to its most natural square, and defers, for the moment, the development of their king’s bishop.

White’s most common reply is 6.Bg5, the **Richter–Rauzer Attack** (ECO codes B60 et seq). The move 6.Bg5 was **Kurt Richter**’s invention, threatening to double Black’s pawns after Bxf6 and forestalling the Dragon by rendering 6...g6 unplayable. After 6...e6, **Vsevolod Rauzer** introduced the modern plan of Qd2 and 0-0-0 in the 1930s. White’s pressure on the d6-pawn often compels Black to respond to Bxf6 with ...gxf6, rather than recapturing with a piece (e.g. the queen on d8) that also has to defend the d-pawn. This weakens their kingside **pawn structure**, in return for which Black gains the two bishops, plus a central pawn majority, though these assets are difficult to exploit.

Another variation is 6.Bc4, called “Sozin” (ECO code B57). It brings the bishop to an aggressive square. Black usually plays 6...e6 to limit the range of White’s bishop, but White can eventually put pressure on the e6-pawn by pushing their f-pawn to f5. White can either castle kingside with 7.Bb3 a6 8.0-0 (the **Fischer–Sozin Attack**, named after **Bobby Fischer** and Russian master **Veniamin Sozin**, who originated it in the 1930s), or queenside with 7.Be3 Be7 (or 7...a6) 8.Qe2 and 9.0-0-0 (the **Velimirović Attack**). Instead of 6...e6, Black can also try **Benko’s** move 6...Qb6, which forces White to make a decision over the d4-knight. This typically leads into more positional lines than the razor-sharp, highly theoretical Sozin and Velimirovic variations.

6.Be2 is the “classical” line (ECO code B58). Black can choose among 6...e5; 6...e6, transposing to the **Scheveningen Variation**; and 6...g6, transposing to the Classical Variation of the **Dragon**. With move ...e5, 7.Nf3 usually continues ...h6 8.O-O Be7 9.Re1; 7.Nb3 is the **dynamic** and not very good **Boleslavsky Variation** (ECO code B59). Other moves include 6.Be3, 6.f3, and 6.g3.

**Scheveningen Variation: 5...e6** Scheveningen Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e6  
Main article: [Sicilian Defence, Scheveningen Variation](#)

In the Scheveningen Variation, Black is content with a “small centre” (pawns on d6 and e6, rather than e5) and prepares to castle kingside. In view of this, **Paul Keres** introduced 6.g4, the **Keres Attack**, in 1943. White intends to drive away the black knight with g5. If Black prevents this with 6...h6, which is the most common answer, White has gained kingside space and discouraged Black from castling in that area, and may later play Bg2. If the complications after 6.g4 are not to White’s taste, a major alternative is 6.Be2, a typical line being 6...a6 (this position can be reached from the Najdorf via 5...a6 6.Be2 e6) 7.0-0 Be7 8.f4 0-0. 6.Be3 and 6.f4 are also common.

While theory indicates that Black can hold the balance in the Keres Attack, players today often prefer to avoid it by playing 5...a6 first, an idea popularized by Kasparov. However, if White is determined to play the g4 thrust, they can prepare it by responding to 5...a6 with 6.h3 (as Fischer sometimes played) or 6.Rg1.

## 2...Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4

Position after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4

2...Nc6 is a natural developing move, and also prepares ...Nf6 (like 2...d6, Black stops White from replying e5). After 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4, Black’s most common move is

4...Nf6. Other important moves are 4...e6 (transposing to the **Taimanov Variation**), 4...g6 (the **Accelerated Dragon**) and 4...e5 (the **Kalashnikov Variation**). Less common choices include 4...Qc7, which may later transpose to the **Taimanov Variation**, 4...Qb6, the **Grivas Variation**, and 4...d6.

After 4...Nf6, White usually replies 5.Nc3. Black can play 5...d6, transposing to the **Classical Variation**; 5...e5, the **Sveshnikov Variation**; or 5...e6, transposing to the **Four Knights Variation**.

**Sveshnikov Variation: 4...Nf6 5.Nc3 e5** Sveshnikov Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5

The Sveshnikov Variation was pioneered by **Evgeny Sveshnikov** and **Gennadi Timoshchenko** in the 1970s. Before their efforts, the variation was called the **Lasker–Pelikan Variation**. **Emanuel Lasker** played it once in his world championship match against **Carl Schlechter**, and **Jorge Pelikan** played it a few times in the 1950s, but Sveshnikov's treatment of the variation was the key to its revitalization. The move 5...e5 seems anti-positional as it leaves black with a backwards d-pawn and a weakness on d5. Also, black would have to accept the doubled f-pawns in the main line of the opening. The opening was popularised when Sveshnikov saw its dynamic potential for Black in the 1970s and 80s. Today, it is extremely popular among grandmasters and amateurs alike. Though some lines still give Black trouble, it has been established as a first-rate defence. The main line after 5...e5 runs as follows:

#### 6. Ndb5

The theoretically critical move, threatening Nd6+. All other moves are considered to allow Black easy equality. 6.Nxc6 is usually met by 6...bxc6, when Black's extra pawn in the centre gives good play; alternatively, even 6...dxc6 7.Qxd8+ Kxd8 is sufficient for equality.<sup>[34]</sup> 6.Nb3 and 6.Nf3 can be well met by 6...Bb4, threatening to win White's pawn on e4.<sup>[35]</sup> 6.Nf5 allows 6...d5! 7.exd5 Bxf5 8.dxc6 bxc6 9.Qf3 Qd7.<sup>[36]</sup> 6.Nde2 can be met by either 6...Bc5 or 6...Bb4.<sup>[37]</sup>

#### 6...d6

Black does not allow 7.Nd6+ Bxd6 8.Qxd6, when White's pair of bishops give them the advantage.

#### 7. Bg5

White gets ready to eliminate the knight on f6, further weakening Black's control over the d5-square. A less common alternative is 7.Nd5 Nxd5 8.exd5 Nb8 (or 8...Ne7), when White will try to exploit their **queenside pawn majority**, while Black will seek counterplay on the king-side.

#### 7...a6

Black forces White's knight back to a3.

#### 8. Na3

The immediate 8.Bxf6 forces 8...gxf6, when after 9.Na3, Black can transpose into the main line with 9...b5 or deviate with 9...f5!?

#### 8...b5!

8...b5 was Sveshnikov's innovation, controlling c4 and threatening ...b4 forking White's knights. Previously, Black played 8...Be6 (the **Bird Variation**), which allowed the a3-knight to return to life with 9.Nc4. The entire variation up to 8...b5 is referred to as the **Chelyabinsk Variation**. It can also be reached from the alternate move order 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Bf4 e5 8.Bg5 a6 9.Na3 b5, which is one move longer. (That alternative move order gives White other alternatives, including 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.e5 Nd5 8.Ne4, intending c4, and the gambit 6.Be2 Bb4 7.0-0!?, allowing Bxc3 8.bxc3 Nxe4.) The move numbers in the following discussion are based on the move order given in bold.

**Chelyabinsk Variation: 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Bg5 a6 8.Na3 b5**

The Sveshnikov Variation has become very popular in master level chess. Black's ...e5 push seems anti-positional: it has made the d6-pawn backward and the d5-square weak. However, in return, Black gets a foothold in the centre and gains time on White's knight, which has been driven to the edge of the board on a3. Top players who have used this variation include **Vladimir Kramnik**, **Veselin Topalov**, **Teimour Radjabov**, **Boris Gelfand**, **Michael Adams** and **Alexander Khalifman**, among many others.

In the diagrammed position after 8...b5, White usually parries the threat of ...b4 by playing 9.Bxf6 or 9.Nd5. After 9.Bxf6, 9...Qxf6?! 10.Nd5 Qd8 fails to 11.c4 b4 (11...bxc4 12.Nxc4 is good for White, who threatens 13.Qa4) 12.Qa4

Bd7 13.Nb5! axb5 14.Qxa8 Qxa8 15.Nc7+ Kd8 16.Nxa8 and the knight escapes via b6. Thus 9...gxf6 is forced, when White continues 10.Nd5. White's powerful knight on d5 and Black's shattered kingside pawn structure are compensated by Black's bishop pair and White's offside knight on a3. Also, Black has the plan of playing 10...f5, followed by ...fxe4 and ...f5 with the second f-pawn, which would give them good control of the centre. An alternative plan is to play 10...Bg7 followed by ...Ne7 to immediately trade off White's powerful knight; this line is known as the **Novosibirsk Variation**.

Instead of 9.Bxf6, White can also play 9.Nd5, which usually leads to quieter play. White decides not to double Black's f-pawns and the game often continues 9...Be7 10.Bxf6 Bxf6 11.c3. This allows White to maintain their knight on d5 by trading off Black's knight on f6, and prepares to bring the knight on a3 back into play with the manoeuvre Na3–c2–e3. Another line is 10.Nxe7 Nxe7! (fighting for control of d5 and not fearing the doubled pawns) 11.Bxf6 gxf6. However, a recent development in the Sveshnikov has been 11.c4 (instead of c3), which often leads to positions where white is pressing for the win at no risk. A quick draw is possible after 9.Nd5 Qa5+!? 10.Bd2 (in order to prevent 10...Nxe4) 10...Qd8 11.Bg5 Qa5+ etc. In order to avoid this, White can play 11.Nxf6+ or 11.c4.

**Accelerated Dragon: 4...g6** Accelerated Dragon: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6  
Main article: **Sicilian Defence, Accelerated Dragon**

Like the standard Dragon Variation, Black develops the bishop to g7 in the Accelerated Dragon. The difference is that Black avoids playing ...d7–d6, so that they can later play ...d7–d5 in one move if possible. For example, if White tries to play in the style of the Yugoslav Attack with 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.f3 0-0 8.Qd2, 8...d5! equalises immediately. When White does play 5.Nc3, it is usually with the idea of continuing 5...Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Bc4 0-0 8.Bb3 (forestalling any tricks involving ...Nxe4 and ...d5), followed by kingside castling.

The critical test of Black's move order is 5.c4, the **Maróczy Bind**. White hopes to cramp Black's position by impeding the ...d7–d5 and ...b7–b5 pawn thrusts. Generally, this line is less tactical than many of the other Sicilian variations, and play involves much strategic maneuvering on both sides. After 5.c4, the main line runs 5...Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 and now 7...0-0 or 7...Ng4 is most frequently played.

**Kalashnikov Variation: 4...e5 5. Nb5 d6** Kalashnikov Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nb5 d6

The Kalashnikov Variation (ECO code B32)<sup>[38]</sup> is a close relative of the **Sveshnikov Variation**, and is sometimes known as the Neo-Sveshnikov. The move 4...e5 has had a long history; **Louis-Charles Mahé de La Bourdonnais** used it in his matches against **Alexander McDonnell** in 1834, and it was also popular for a short time in the 1940s. These earlier games focused on the **Löwenthal Variation** (similar to the Kalashnikov but the reply to 5.Nb5 is 5...a6) with 4...e5 5.Nb5 a6 6.Nd6+ Bxd6 7.Qxd6 Qf6, where Black gives up the two bishops to achieve a lead in development. However, the move fell out of use once it was determined that White kept the advantage in these lines.

Only in the late 1980s did Black players revive 4...e5 with the intention of meeting 5.Nb5 with 5...d6: this is the Kalashnikov Variation. The ideas in this line are similar to those in the Sveshnikov – Black accepts a backward pawn on d6 and weakens the d5-square but gains time by chasing the knight. The difference between the two variations is that Black has not developed their knight to f6 and White has not brought their knight out to c3, so both players have extra options. Black may forego ...Nf6 in favour of ...Ne7, e.g. after 6.N1c3 a6 7.Na3 b5 8.Nd5 Nge7, which avoids White's plan of Bg5 and Bxf6 to inflict doubled f-pawns on Black. Or, Black can delay bringing out the knight in favour of playing ...Be7–g5 or a quick ...f5. On the other hand, White has the option of 6.c4, which solidifies their grip on d5 and clamps down on ...b5, but leaves the d4-square slightly weak.

## 2...e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4

Black's move 2...e6 gives priority to developing the dark-squared bishop. After 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4, Black has three main moves: 4...Nc6 (the **Taimanov Variation**), 4...a6 (the **Kan Variation**) and 4...Nf6. After 4...Nf6 5.Nc3, Black can transpose to the **Scheveningen Variation** with 5...d6, or play 5...Nc6, the **Four Knights Variation**. Also note that after 4...Nf6 White cannot play 5.e5? because of 5...Qa5+ followed by Qxe5.

**Taimanov Variation: 4...Nc6** Taimanov Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6

Named after **Mark Taimanov**, the Taimanov Variation can be reached through 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 or 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e6. Black develops the knight to a natural square and keeps his options open regarding the placement of his other pieces. One of the ideas of this system is to develop the king's bishop to b4 or c5. White can prevent this by 5.Nb5 d6, when 6.c4 leads to a version of the **Maróczy Bind** favoured by Karpov. The

resulting position after 6.c4 Nf6 7.N1c3 a6 8.Na3 b6 is a type of **Hedgehog**.

The **Kasparov Gambit** 8...d5 was played twice in the **World Chess Championship 1985**, but virtually disappeared from master praxis after the game Karpov–van der Wiel, Brussels (SWIFT) 1986.

5.Nc3 is more common nowadays than 5.Nb5, when 5...d6 normally transposes to the **Scheveningen Variation** and 5...Nf6 is the **Four Knights Variation** (see below). Independent moves for Black are 5...Qc7 and 5...a6, with the former being the more usual move order seen in recent years, as after 5...a6, the continuation 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.Bd3, despite its apparent simplicity, has given Black difficulties in reaching equality. Taimanov's idea was to play 5...a6 (preventing Nb5) followed by ...Nge7 and ...Nxd4.

**Kan (Paulsen) Variation: 4...a6** Kan Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6

Named after **Ilya Kan**. By playing 4...a6, Black prevents Nb5 and prepares an eventual ...b5 advance.

White's second most popular reply is 5.Nc3, when Black's development of the kingside knight often takes focus, since playing ...Nf6 can be met with e5 which both creates a Black weakness on the d6-square and causes the Black knight a disadvantageous move. So Black normally plays a move to control the e5-square and prevent the pawn from advancing. The main Kan move is 5...Qc7, although 5...Nc6 transposing into a **Taimanov** or 5...d6 transposing into a **Scheveningen** can occur. An alternative idea is the immediate 5...b5 to create pressure from the queenside with the idea of playing ...b4 attacking the c3-knight, or Bb7 to build pressure along the long white-squared diagonal. White generally answers with 6. Bd3, supporting the e4 pawn.

The most popular fifth move for White is 5.Bd3, when after 5...Bc5 6.Nb3 Black can either retreat 6...Be7 where 7.Qg4 makes Black's kingside problematic, or 6...Ba7. Also possible is 5.c4 to create a **Maróczy bind** setup.

**Four Knights Variation: 4...Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6** Four Knights Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6

The Four Knights Variation is mainly used as a way of getting into the main line **Sveshnikov Variation**, reached after 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Bf4 e5 8.Bg5 a6 9.Na3 b5. The point of this move order is to avoid lines such as the **Rossolimo Variation** (1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5), or 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Nd5, which are possi-

ble in the standard **Sveshnikov** move order. On the other hand, in the **Four Knights** move order, White acquires the extra option of 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.e5 Nd5 8.Ne4, so White is not obliged to enter the **Sveshnikov**.

If Black is not aiming for the **Sveshnikov**, the main alternative is to play 6...Bb4 in reply to 6.Ndb5. Then 7.a3 Bxc3+ 8.Nxc3 d5 9.exd5 exd5 leads to a position where Black has given up the two bishops but has active pieces and the possibility of playing ...d5–d4.

#### 4.1.4 2.Nf3 without 3.d4: White's third move alternatives

White can play 2.Nf3 without intending to follow up with 3.d4. The systems given below are usually classified along with White's second move alternatives as **Anti-Sicilians**.

##### 2...d6 without 3.d4

**Canal-Sokolsky Attack: 3.Bb5+** Moscow Variation or the Canal–Sokolsky Attack: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+

After 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6, White's most important alternative to 3.d4 is **3.Bb5+**, known as the **Moscow Variation** or the **Canal–Sokolsky Attack**. Grandmasters sometimes choose this variation when they wish to avoid theory; for instance, it was played by **Garry Kasparov** in the online game **Kasparov–The World**. Experts in this line include **GMs Sergei Rublevsky** and **Tomáš Oral**. Black can block the check with 3...Bd7, 3...Nc6 or 3...Nd7. The position after 3...Nc6 can also be reached via the **Rossolimo Variation** after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 d6. Most common is 3...Bd7, when after 4.Bxd7+ Qxd7, White can either play 5.0-0 followed by c3 and d4, or 5.c4 in the style of the **Maróczy Bind**.

**The World Team Variation** of the Canal–Sokolsky Attack continues with 5.c4 Nc6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.0-0 g6 8.d4 cxd4 9.Nxd4 Bg7 10.Nde2 Qe6, forking White's pawns on e4 and c4. This move was suggested by **Irina Krush**, and played in the **Kasparov–The World, 1999** online game. Kasparov noted its novelty.<sup>[39]</sup>

**Others** Another possibility for White is **3.c3**, intending to establish a pawn centre with d4 next move. The most frequent continuation is 3...Nf6 4.Be2, when 4...Nxe4?? loses to 5.Qa4+. White sometimes plays **3.Nc3**, which usually transposes to the **Open Sicilian** after 3...Nf6 4.d4.

##### 2...Nc6 without 3.d4

**Nimzovich-Rossolimo Attack: 3.Bb5** Rossolimo Variation: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

The **Rossolimo Variation, 3.Bb5**, is a well-respected alternative to 3.d4. It is named after **Nicolas Rossolimo** and is related to the Moscow Variation. White's usual intention is to play Bxc6, giving Black **doubled pawns**. Black's major responses are 3...g6 preparing ...Bg7, 3...d6 preparing ...Bd7 (a hybrid line that also arises from the Moscow Variation after 2...d6 3.Bb5+ Nc6), and 3...e6 preparing 4...Nge7. **Sergei Rublevsky** and **Tomáš Oral** both play this line as well as the Moscow Variation.

**Others 3.Nc3** is a common transpositional device for White, who can play 4.d4 or 4.Bb5 next move depending on Black's response. Black sometimes plays 3...e5 to avoid both moves; then 4.Bc4 is considered White's best move. **3.c3** transposes to lines of the Alapin Variation after 3...Nf6 or 3...d5.

### 2...e6 without 3.d4

White sometimes plays **3.Nc3** as a waiting move, though it has little independent significance. With **3.d3**, White plans to develop in **King's Indian Attack** style with g3 and Bg2; this line was used by Fischer to crush **Oscar Panno** in a famous game (Fischer–Panno, **Buenos Aires** 1970). **3.c3** will transpose to lines of the Alapin Variation after 3...Nf6, or the **French Defence** after 3...d5 4.e5 Nc6 5.d4, though 4...d4 is stronger, as after 5.cxd4 cxd4 6.Qa4+ Nc6 7.Bb5 Bd7 8.Bxc6 Bxc6 9.Qxd4 Bxf3 is a strong pawn sacrifice, giving Black excellent compensation. **3.b3**, intending Bb2, is a rare independent try, occasionally essayed by **Heikki Westerinen** in the 1970s.

### 3.Bd3

In *Foxy Openings Vol. 30*, IM **Danny Kopec** suggests the move 3.Bd3 against any of Black's common responses, intending to follow up with c3 and Bc2. This line is known as "The Kopec System."<sup>[40]</sup>

### 4.1.5 2.Nf3: Black's second move alternatives

After 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3, Black has some less commonly played options apart from 2...d6, 2...Nc6 and 2...e6.

### 2...g6: Hyper-Accelerated Dragon

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 g6 3.d4 Bg7 4.c4 cxd4

After 2...g6, White commonly plays 3.d4. Other moves are 3.c3 and 3.c4. Most common here is 3...cxd4 but 3...Bg7 is also played. In case of 3...cxd4 White may play 4.Nxd4. Then 4...Nc6 may be played for a 2...Nc6 line. The other main move for Black is 4...Bg7. This will have either 5.c4 or 5.Nc3. For either 3.c3 or 3.c4, then Black may play 3...Bg7. Then 4.d4 with 3.c4 transposes to the 3.d4 line. Or 4.d4 with 3.c3 transposes to an Alapin (or Accelerated Dragon) line.

### 2...a6: O'Kelly Variation

**2...a6** is the **O'Kelly Variation**. The idea is that 3.d4 runs into 3...cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5 when 6.Nb5 is prevented, and Black will equalize by playing 6...Bb4 and possibly ...d5. However, after 3.c3 or 3.c4 it is unclear how 2...a6 has improved Black's position.

### 2...Nf6: Nimzovich-Rubinstein Variation

**2...Nf6** is the **Nimzowitsch Variation**. It bears some similarity to **Alekhine's Defence**.<sup>[41]</sup> White's strongest reply is to chase the knight by 3.e5 Nd5 4.Nc3 and now (a) 4...Nxc3 5.dxc3, when 5...b6?, as Nimzowitsch played and recommended, loses to 6.e6! f6 7.Ne5!<sup>[42]</sup> or (b) 4...e6 (the main line) 5.Nxd5 exd5 6.d4 Nc6 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.Qxd5 Qb6 (8...d6 9.exd6 Qb6 is also played)<sup>[43]</sup> 9.Bc4! Bxf2+ 10.Ke2 0-0 11.Rf1 Bc5 12.Ng5 Nd4+ 13.Kd1 with sharp play favoring White.<sup>[44]</sup>

### Others

Other moves include:

- **2...b6** is the **Katalymov Variation**, after the Kazakh/Russian master Boris Katalymov. It is generally considered better for White, though it has frequently been played by the French GM **Christian Bauer**. Other GMs, including **Gata Kamsky**, have occasionally used it as a surprise weapon.
- **2...Qc7** is the **Quinteros Variation**. It will frequently transpose into a standard line such as the Taimanov Variation or Paulsen Variation, or else White can play 3.c3 in the style of the Alapin Variation, where Black's queen may not be so well placed on c7.

### 4.1.6 Closed Sicilian

Closed Sicilian (Main line): 1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.d3 d6

**2.Nc3** is White's second most common move responding to 1.e4 c5. Black's options are similar to those for 2.Nf3, the most common being ...Nc6, along with ...e6 and ...d6, and less commonly ...a6 and ...g6. In all cases, White can then play 3.Nf3, as if White had played 2.Nf3 then 3.Nc3 (e.g. 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3, B30).

For the most part, other moves are the Closed Sicilian. Possible moves are 3.g3 and 3.f4 in general, also 3.Nge2, and less commonly 3.d3 and 3.Bc4. Some lines may transpose to the Open Sicilian, but there are many that do not.

Also of some interest is 3.Bb5 to ...Nc6.

A typical line is **2...Nc6 3.g3** (ECO code B24). Also **2...Nc6 3.f4** is the Closed Sicilian, Grand Prix Attack (part of B23).

White can also keep their options open with 3.Nge2. **Andrew Soltis** has dubbed that the "Chameleon System", since White maintains the option of playing a Closed Sicilian with 4.g3 or transposing to a standard Open Sicilian with 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4. Two drawbacks are that (a) the Closed Sicilian lines with an early Nge2 are not very challenging for Black, and (b) if Black plays 2...Nc6 3.Nge2 g6, 4.d4 reaches an **Accelerated Dragon** where White has lost the option of playing c4, the **Maróczy Bind**, often considered White's best line.<sup>[45]</sup> In view of possible transpositions to the main Sicilian variations, Black's reply to 2.Nc3 will depend on what they play in the Open Sicilian. 2...Nc6 is the most common choice, but 2...e6 and 2...d6 are often played. The Main line of the Closed Sicilian is 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.d3 d6 (diagram), when White's main options are 6.Be3 followed by Qd2 and possibly 0-0-0, and 6.f4 followed by Nf3 and 0-0.

### 4.1.7 White's second move alternatives

Other moves besides 2.Nf3 and 2.Nc3 are popular.

#### Alapin Variation: 2.c3

**2.c3** is the **Alapin Variation** or **c3 Sicilian**. Originally championed by **Semyon Alapin** at the end of the 19th century, it was revived in the late 1960s by **Evgeny Sveshnikov** and **Evgeny Vasiukov**. Nowadays its strongest practitioners include grandmasters **Sergei Tiviakov** and **Eduardas Rozentalis**. White aims to set up a classical pawn centre with 3.d4, so Black should counter immediately in the centre by 2...Nf6 or 2...d5. The line 2...Nf6 3.e5 Nd5 resembles

**Alekhine's Defence**, but the inclusion of the moves c3 and ...c5 is definitely in Black's favour. Now White can play 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nf3, when Black has a choice between 5...e6 and 5...Nc6. Another idea for White is 5.Bc4, which is met by 5...Qc7. 2...d5 3.exd5 Qxd5 4.d4 Nf6 5.Nf3 is the other main line, when Black's main options are 5...e6 and 5...Bg4. In this line, White usually ends up with an **isolated queen's pawn** after pawns are exchanged on d4. A rarer option on Black's second move is 2...e6, with the aim of transposing to the Advance Variation of the **French Defence** after 3.d4 d5 4.e5.

#### Grand Prix Attack: 2.f4

**2.f4** is the **Grand Prix Attack** or **McDonnell Attack**: the latter name stems from the 14th match game played in London in 1834 between **Alexander McDonnell** and **Charles Louis Mahé de La Bourdonnais**, won by Black. According to **Jeremy Silman** and others, Black's best reply is 2...d5 3.exd5 Nf6!, the Tal Gambit, which has caused the immediate 2.f4 to decline in popularity.<sup>[46]</sup> White may decline the gambit with 3.Nc3, called the "Toilet Variation", so named after its reputed place of invention.<sup>[47]</sup> A less common option is 2...e6, as La Bourdonnais played against McDonnell. Players usually enter the Grand Prix Attack nowadays by playing 2.Nc3 first before continuing 3.f4. The modern main line runs 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7. Here White can play the positional 5.Bb5, threatening to double Black's pawns with Bxc6, or the more aggressive 5.Bc4, aiming for a kingside attack.

#### Smith-Morra Gambit: 2.d4

**2.d4 cxd4 3.c3** is the **Smith-Morra Gambit**. Declining it by either 3...Nf6 or 3...d5, transposing to the c3 line, is possible, but accepting it by 3...dxc3 is critical.<sup>[48]</sup> After 4.Nxc3, White is considered not to have enough compensation for the pawn;<sup>[49][50][51][52]</sup> however, it can be dangerous for Black if he is unprepared, as there are many pitfalls for the unwary.<sup>[53]</sup>

#### Others

Other moves include:

- **2.Ne2** is the **Keres Variation**, a favourite of **Paul Keres**, and has similar ideas to the Chameleon System discussed under 2.Nc3 – White can follow up with 3.d4 with an Open Sicilian, 3.g3 with a Closed Sicilian, or 3.Nbc3, continuing to defer the choice between the two.

- **2.d3** signals White's intention to develop along **King's Indian Attack** lines, and usually transposes to the Closed Sicilian.
- **2.b3** followed by 3.Bb2 is the **Snyder Variation**, named for USCF master Robert M. Snyder.<sup>[54]</sup> It has been used occasionally by Nigel Short and is a favourite of Georgian GM Tamaz Gelashvili.
- **2.g3** is the **Steinitz Variation**, which was sometimes also played by Taimanov, and can transpose to the Closed Sicilian but offers other options such as 2...d5 3.exd5 Qxd5, with Black's Queen threatening to capture White's exposed Rook, and an incipient central buildup with c3 and d4 for White.
- **2.c4** occasionally leads to positions that resemble lines in the **English Opening**.
- **2.b4** is the **Wing Gambit**. White's idea is 2. b4 cxb4 3. a3, hoping to deflect Black's c-pawn, then dominate the center with an early d4. However, Black can gain an advantage with accurate play. The Wing Gambit is thus generally considered too reckless. GM Joe Gallagher calls it "a forgotten relic, hardly having set foot in a tournament hall since the days of Frank Marshall and Rudolph Spielmann. White sacrifices a pawn for ... well, not a lot."<sup>[55]</sup>
- **2.a3** is similar to the **Wing Gambit**, the idea being to play 3.b4 next move.
- **2.a4** is usually followed up with 3.f4, with play similar to a **Grand Prix Attack**. Simon Williams once defeated Jovica Radovanovic with the line.<sup>[56]</sup>
- **2.e5**, which gains space and prevents Black playing Nf6. White often support the e5 pawn with 3.f4 or 3.Nf3. The drawback of 2.e5 is that no additional pressure is brought to the center, allowing Black various options. Wilhelm Steinitz played 2.e5 at least three times in tournament play, defeating Szymon Winawer, Max Weiss, and Celso Golmayo Zúpide.<sup>[57]</sup>
- **2.Na3** is an eccentric move recently brought into prominence by GM Vadim Zvjaginsev at the 2005 Russian Chess Championship Superfinal. He used it thrice during the tournament, drawing twice and beating Alexander Khalifman.
- **2.Bc4** is the **Boulder Attack**, and though once played at the highest level, is popular today only among club players or beginners who are unfamiliar with the Sicilian and are looking either to attack the weak f7 pawn or to prepare for a quick kingside castle. However, after a move such as 2...e6, Black will soon play ...d5 and open up the centre while gaining time by attacking the

bishop. Anderssen–Wyvill, London 1851 continued 2..e6 3.Nc3 a6 4.a4 Nc6 5.d3 g6 6.Nge2 Bg7 7.0-0 Nge7 8.f4 0-0 9.Bd2 d5 10.Bb3 Nd4 11.Nxd4, and now Soltis recommends 11...cxd4! 12.Ne2 Bd7!<sup>[58]</sup>

- **2.Qh5**, threatening the c-pawn as in the **Wayward Queen Attack**, was played twice in 2005 by Hikaru Nakamura, but the move is considered dubious. Simply 2...Nf6 gives Black a comfortable position after 3.Qxc5 Nxe4, while 3.Qh4 displaces the queen and loses time. Nakamura lost in 23 moves to Andrei Volokitin in 2005, and Neil McDonald criticised the opening experiment as "rather foolish".<sup>[59]</sup>

#### 4.1.8 ECO codes

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* classifies the Sicilian Defence under the codes B20 through B99, giving it more codes than any other opening. In general these guidelines apply:

- Codes B20 through B29 cover lines after 1.e4 c5 where White does not play 2.Nf3, and lines where White plays 2.Nf3 and Black responds with a move other than 2...d6, 2...Nc6 or 2...e6.
- Codes B30 through B39 cover the lines beginning 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 that do not transpose into lines that can also begin with 2...d6. The most important variations included here are the Rossolimo, Kalashnikov, Sveshnikov and Accelerated Dragon.
- Codes B40 through B49 cover the lines beginning 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6, most importantly the Taimanov and Kan variations.
- Codes B50 through B59 cover the lines after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 not covered in codes B60–B99. This includes the Moscow Variation (3.Bb5+), 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4, and lines in the Classical Variation except for the Richter–Rauzer Attack, including the Sozin Attack and the Boleslavsky Variation.
- Codes B60 through B69 cover the Richter–Rauzer Attack of the Classical Variation.
- Codes B70 through B79 cover the normal (unaccelerated) Dragon Variation.
- Codes B80 through B89 cover the Scheveningen Variation.
- Codes B90 through B99 cover the Najdorf Variation.

### 4.1.9 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 4.1.10 References

#### Notes

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The Sicilian ... has probably undergone more vicissitudes in regard to its estimation and appreciation than any other form of defence. In 1851, when the **Great Exhibition** London Tournament was commenced, it was entirely out of favor, but its successful adoption on so many occasions by Anderssen, the first prize winner, entirely restored it to confidence. Its rejection by Morphy in 1857–8, and by Steinitz in 1862, caused it again to lapse in consideration as not being a perfectly valid and reliable defence. Its fortunes have ever since continued in an unsettled state. Staunton (three weeks before his death), ... pronounced it to be quite trustworthy, and on the same date Lowenthal expressed a similar opinion. Baron Kolisch ... concurs in these views.

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## 4.2 Sicilian Defence, Alapin Variation

In chess, the **Sicilian Defence, Alapin Variation** is a response to the Sicilian Defence characterised by the moves:

1. e4 c5
2. c3

It is named after the Russian master Semyon Alapin (1856–1923). For many years it was not held in high regard, since 2...d5 was thought to allow Black easy equality.<sup>[1][2]</sup>

Today, the Alapin is considered one of the most solid and respectable Anti-Sicilians and is championed by grandmasters such as Evgeny Sveshnikov, Eduardas Rozentalis, Sergei Tiviakov and Drazen Sermek. It has been played by World Champions Viswanathan Anand, Garry Kasparov, Anatoly Karpov, Veselin Topalov and Vladimir Kramnik.

The Alapin is also sometimes seen in deferred form, particularly if Black chooses an unusual second move after 2.Nf3. For example, after 2.Nf3 a6 or 2.Nf3 Qc7, 3.c3 is often seen, since neither ...a6 nor ...Qc7 are particularly useful moves against the Alapin.

### 4.2.1 Main variations

Alapin Variation 2...Nf6

#### 2...Nf6

The main line in current practice is **2... Nf6 3. e5 Nd5** and can also arise if White offers, and Black declines, the **Smith–Morra Gambit** (1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3 Nf6 4.e5 Nd5).

White has a number of options including 4.d4, 4.Nf3, 4.g3 and 4.Bc4.

Alapin Variation 2...d5

#### 2...d5

This is the main alternative to 2...Nf6 for Black. The usual continuation is **3. exd5 Qxd5**, a line known as the **Barmen Defense**.<sup>[3]</sup> 3.e5 may transpose into the **Advance Variation** of the **French Defence** if Black responds with 3...e6, but Black has other alternatives. After 3.exd5, 3...Nf6 is possible, but it is not clear whether Black receives sufficient compensation for the pawn.

The main options revolve around:

- **4. d4 Nc6** and now 5.dxc5 or 5.Nf3
- **4. d4 Nf6 5. Nf3** when after both 5...e6 and 5...Bg4 White can try a number of different moves.

Alapin Variation 2...e6

## 2...e6

This is Black's most solid response, preparing 3...d5. It is closely related to the French Defense, to which it often transposes. White can transpose to the Advance Variation of the French Defense with 3.d4 d5 4.e5. Alternatively, White can transpose to a sort of Tarrasch French with 3.d4 d5 4.Nd2, or try to demonstrate a slight advantage with 3.d4 d5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Be3.

Alapin Variation 2...d6

## 2...d6

This is a sharp response. Black often offers a gambit with 3.d4 Nf6 4.dxc5 Nc6 (4...Nxe4?? 5.Qa4+) 5.cxd6 Nxe4. White can instead play quietly, however, with 3.d4 Nf6 4.Bd3, occupying the centre and maintaining a spatial advantage.

### 4.2.2 Other tries

Alapin Variation 2...e5

## 2...e5

Play usually continues 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.Bc4, with a solid edge for White.

### 4.2.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 4.2.4 References

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### 4.2.6 External links

- Chess openings Sicilian, Alapin (B22)
- An Interesting Idea in the Alapin Sicilian

## 4.3 Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation

In chess, the **Dragon Variation**<sup>[1]</sup> is one of the main lines of the Sicilian Defence and begins with the moves:

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 d6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 g6

In the Dragon, Black fianchettoes their bishop on the h8–a1 diagonal. The line is one of the sharpest and most aggressive variations of the Sicilian Defence, making it one of the sharpest of all chess openings.<sup>[2]</sup>

The modern form of the Dragon was originated by German master **Louis Paulsen** around 1880.<sup>[3]</sup> It was played frequently by **Henry Bird** that decade, then received general acceptance around 1900 when played by **Harry Nelson Pillsbury** and other masters.

The name “Dragon” was first coined by Russian chess master and amateur astronomer **Fyodor Dus-Chotimirsky** who noted the resemblance of Black’s kingside pawn structure to the constellation **Draco**.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### 4.3.1 Yugoslav Attack: 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 0-0 8.Qd2 Nc6

The Yugoslav Attack is considered to be the main line that gives maximum chances for both sides, it continues:

##### 6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3

The point of White’s last move is to safeguard e4 and to stop Black from playing ...Ng4 harassing White’s dark-squared bishop. Black cannot play 6.Be3 Ng4?? immediately because of 7.Bb5+ either winning a piece after 7...Bd7 as white can play Qxg4 due to the pin on the d7 bishop, or winning an exchange and pawn after 7...Nc6 8.Nxc6 bxc6 9.Bxc6 forking king and rook.

##### 7... 0-0 8. Qd2 Nc6

and now there are fundamentally two distinct branches with **9. 0-0-0** leading to more positional play while **9. Bc4** leads to highly tactical double-edged positions.

The Yugoslav Attack exemplifies the spirit of the Dragon with race-to-mate pawn storms on opposite sides of the board. White tries to break open the Black kingside and deliver mate down the h-file, while Black seeks counterplay on the queenside with sacrificial attacks. Typical White strategies are exchanging dark-squared bishops by Be3–h6, sacrificing material to open the h-file, and exploiting pressure on the a2–g8 diagonal and the weakness of the d5 square.

Black will typically counterattack on the queenside, using the queenside pawns, rooks, and dark squared bishop. Black sometimes plays h5 (the Soltis Variation) to defend against White’s kingside attack. Other typical themes for Black are exchanging White’s light-square bishop by Nc6–e5–c4, pressure on the c-file, sacrificing the exchange on c3, advancing the b-pawn and pressure on the long diagonal. Black will generally omit ...a6 because White will generally win in a straight pawn attack since Black has given White a hook on g6 to attack. In general, White will avoid moving the pawns on a2/b2/c2, and so Black’s pawn storm will nearly always be slower than White’s on the kingside.

Black can frequently obtain an acceptable endgame even after sacrificing the exchange because of White’s h-pawn sacrifice and doubled pawns.

#### Yugoslav Attack with 9.0-0-0

Position after 16...Be6!

After years of believing White’s best play and chance for advantage lay in the main line with 9. Bc4, this older main line made a major comeback. White omits Bc4 in order to speed up the attack. It used to be thought that allowing 9...d5 here allows Black to equalize easily but further analysis and play have proven that things are not so clear cut. In fact, recently Black experienced a time of difficulty in the 9...d5 line facing a brilliant idea by **Ivanchuk** which seemed to give White the advantage. Some Black players began experimenting with 9...Bd7 and 9...Nxd4. Fortunately for Black, the 9...d5 line has been doing better in practice. A brilliancy found for White one day is soon enough overturned by some new resource for Black. A case in point is the following line where the evaluation of a major line was turned upside down overnight because of a queen sacrifice played by **GM Mikhail Golubev**, an expert on the Dragon: **9. 0-0-0 d5!? 10. Kb1!? Nxd4 11. e5! Nf5! 12. exf6 Bxf6 13. Nxd5 Qxd5! 14. Qxd5 Nxe3 15. Qd3 Nxd1 16. Qxd1 Be6!**, where Black has almost sufficient compensation for the queen.

#### Yugoslav Attack with 9.Bc4

Main article: [Sicilian, Dragon, Yugoslav Attack, 9.Bc4](#)  
The Soltis Variation of the 9.Bc4 Yugoslav Attack

The purpose of 9.Bc4 is to prevent Black from playing the freeing move ...d6–d5. The variations resulting from this move are notorious for having been heavily analysed. In addition to covering d5, White’s light-squared bishop helps cover White’s queenside and controls the a2–g8 diagonal leading to Black’s king. However, the bishop is exposed on c4 to an attack by a rook on c8, and usually has to retreat to b3, giving Black more time to organize his attack. Common in this line is an exchange sacrifice on c3 by Black to break up White’s queenside pawns, and sacrifices to open up the long diagonal for Black’s bishop on g7 are also common. An example of both ideas is the line **9. Bc4 Bd7 10. 0-0-0 Rc8 11. Bb3 Ne5 12. h4 Nc4 13. Bxc4 Rxc4 14. h5 Nxh5 15. g4 Nf6 16. Bh6 Nxe4! 17. Qe3 Rxc3!**

The Soltis Variation was the main line of the Dragon up until the late 1990s. Garry Kasparov played the move three times in the **1995 World Championship** against Viswanathan Anand, scoring two wins and a draw. The line

goes **9. Bc4 Bd7 10. 0-0-0 Rc8 11. Bb3 Ne5 12. h4 h5** (the key move, holding up White's kingside pawn advance). Other important deviations for Black are **10...Qa5** and **12...Nc4**. More recently, White players have often avoided the Soltis by playing **12.Kb1**, which has proven so effective that Black players have in turn tried to dodge this with **10... Rb8**, known as the Chinese Dragon.

### 4.3.2 Classical Variation: 6.Be2

The Classical Variation, **6. Be2**, is the oldest White response to the Dragon. It is the second most common White response behind the Yugoslav Attack. After **6... Bg7**, White has two main continuations:

- After **7. Be3 Nc6 8. 0-0 0-0**, White's two main responses are **9. Nb3** and **9. Qd2**. The knight move is a very common one in the Classical Variation and Qd2 is well met with **9... d5**.
- After **7. 0-0** White has a choice of e3 and g5 for their bishop. If it is placed on e3, the game will usually transpose into the lines above. In his book *Starting Out: The Sicilian Dragon*, Andrew Martin calls Be3 "the traditional way of handling the variation", and describes Bg5 as being "much more dangerous" and "White's best chance to play for a win in the Classical Dragon." As with Be3, after Bg5, White will normally place their knight on b3, avoiding an exchange on d4.

### 4.3.3 Levenfish Variation: 6.f4

The Levenfish Variation, **6. f4**, is named after Russian GM **Grigory Levenfish** who recommended it in the 1937 Russian Chess Yearbook. It is not currently very common in the highest levels in chess. White prepares 7.e5 attacking Black's f6-knight therefore in the pre-computer era **6... Nc6** or **6... Nbd7** were considered mandatory to meet the Levenfish variation. However, it has transpired that after **6... Bg7 7. e5 Nh5 8. Bb5+ Bd7 9. e6 fxe6 10. Nxe6 Bxc3+ 11. bxc3 Qc8** Black might actually be better.

### 4.3.4 Harrington–Glek Variation: 6.Be3 Bg7 7.Be2 0-0 8.Qd2

The Harrington–Glek Variation is another option for White. Named after Grandmaster **Igor Glek** who has devoted considerable effort evaluating the resulting positions for White. **6. Be3 Bg7 7. Be2 0-0 8. Qd2!?** GM John Emms wrote, "Although it's difficult to beat the Yugoslav in terms of sharp, aggressive play, 7.Be2 0-0 8.Qd2!? also contains a fair amount of venom ... White's plans include

queenside castling and a kingside attack. And there's a major plus point in that it's much, much less theoretical!"<sup>[5]</sup>

After the main moves **8... Nc6 9. 0-0-0** we reach a tabiya for the position.

Position after 9.0-0-0

Here Black has tested several options and here they are listed in order of popularity:

- **9... Nxd4** This move can lead to both positional and attacking chances for both sides. White must keep aware that Black may have opportunities to offer an exchange sacrifice on c3 in order to exploit the unprotected e4 pawn. **10.Bxd4 Be6 11.Kb1!** a good preparatory move in many lines of the Sicilian Dragon. White wants to be able to play Nd5 if the situation becomes conducive. White's king is also getting away from the open c-file which is where much of Black's counterplay can develop. **11...Qa5** With this move we reach a position where chances are roughly balanced and play can take on a life of its own.
- **9... Bd7** This move allows Black to keep all his pieces on the board to mount an attack. **10.h4! h5!** Black needs to keep White's pawns from making a breaking capture. **11.f3 Rc8 12.Kb1 Ne5 13.Bg5!** Black can now go for broke with **13...b5!?** with an interesting position to contest with over the board.
- **9... Ng4** This move is played to pick up the bishop pair by exploiting the absence of f3 in White's opening. White is usually fine with allowing the trade of bishop for knight considering that his light-square bishop does little in this line in comparison with the f6-knight's defensive abilities and White also will gain the use of f2–f3 to drive Black back after he recaptures with his bishop. **10.Bxg4 Bxg4 11.f3 Bd7 12.Kb1 Ne5 13.b3! Rc8 14.h4 Re8!** Again, both sides have good chances.
- **9... d5!?** A pawn sacrifice similar to lines in the more common Yugoslav mainlines. **10.exd5 Nxd5 11.Nxc6 bxc6 12.Nxd5 cxd5 13.Qxd5 Qc7!** giving up two rooks for the queen but keeping attacking chances. **14.Qxa8! Bf5 15.Qxf8+ Kxf8 16.Bd3! Be6 17.Kb1**
- **9... a6** **10.Kb1 Nxd4 11.Bxd4 b5 12.h4! h5 13.f3 Be6 14.g4! J.Van der Wiel vs. H. Eidam, Gran Canaria 1996.**

### 4.3.5 Other options

Other options on White's sixth move include **6. Bc4**, **6. f3**, and **6. g3**.

When Black adopts the Dragon formation without 2...d6, White must watch out for ...d5 which often immediately equalises. Lines where Black does this include the **Accelerated Dragon** (1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6) and **Hyper-Accelerated Dragon** (1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 g6).

Another option for Black is to play what has been called the “Dragodorf”, which combines ideas from the Dragon with those of the **Najdorf Variation**. While this line may be played via the Dragon move order (see the Yugoslav Attack with 9.Bc4). Black can arrive at it with a Najdorf move order: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 g6 (or 5...g6 6.Be3 a6), with the idea of Bg7 and Nbd7. Such a move order would be used to try to avoid a Yugoslav type attack; for instance, after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6, White could play 6.Be2 or 6.f4. In both cases, especially the latter, a Yugoslav-style attack loses some momentum. Usually the bishop is more ideally placed on c4, where it can pressure f7 and help defend the white king (though the 9.0-0-0 variation of the Dragon shows that this is not completely necessary), and if White plays f4 and then castles queenside, they must always be on guard for Ng4 ideas, something which the move f3 in traditional Dragon positions usually discourages. Nonetheless, a Yugoslav-style attack is still playable after both 6.Be2 g6 or 6.f4 g6.

Some famous exponents of the Dragon are Veselin Topalov, Andrew Soltis, Jonathan Mestel, Chris Ward, Sergei Tiviakov, Alexei Fedorov, Mikhail Golubev the late Tony Miles and Eduard Gufeld. Garry Kasparov used the Dragon with success as a surprise weapon against world title challenger Viswanathan Anand in 1995 but did not use it subsequently. The Dragon saw its popularity declining in the late 1990s as a result of White resuscitating the old line with 9.0-0-0, however recently there has been a resurgence with moves such as the Chinese Dragon 10.0-0-0 Rb8!? and an injection of new ideas in the 9.0-0-0 line by Dragon devotees.

### 4.3.6 ECO codes

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) has ten codes for the Dragon Variation, B70<sup>[1]</sup> through B79. After 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6, there is:

- B70 5.Nc3 g6
- B71 5.Nc3 g6 6.f4 (**Levenfish Variation**)
- B72 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3
- B73 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.Be2 Nc6 8.0-0 (Classical Variation)
- B74 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.Be2 Nc6 8.0-0 0-0 9.Nb3

- B75 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 (Yugoslav Attack)
- B76 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 0-0
- B77 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 0-0 8.Qd2 Nc6 9.Bc4
- B78 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 0-0 8.Qd2 Nc6 9.Bc4 Bd7 10.0-0-0
- B79 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 0-0 8.Qd2 Nc6 9.Bc4 Bd7 10.0-0-0 Qa5 11.Bb3 Rfc8 12.h4

### 4.3.7 See also

- **List of chess openings**

### 4.3.8 References

- [1] “**Sicilian, Dragon Variation (B70)**”. *Chess openings*. Chess-games.com. Retrieved 2007-04-25.
- [2] Wolff, Patrick (1997). “9”. *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Chess*. Patrick Wolff. p. 147. ISBN 0-02-861736-3.
- [3] Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1987). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University Press. p. 95. ISBN 0-19-281986-0.
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### 4.3.10 External links

- Pablo Arguelles. “Sicilian Defense”. *Chess Series*. Google Video. Retrieved 2007-04-25.
- Sicilian, Dragon Variation by Bill Wall
- Mikhail Golubev – Experimenting With the Dragon

## 4.4 Sicilian Defence, Accelerated Dragon

The **Accelerated Dragon** (or **Accelerated Fianchetto**) is a chess opening variation of the **Sicilian Defence** that begins with the moves:

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 g6

The Accelerated Dragon features an early g6 by Black. An important difference between this line and the **Dragon** is that Black avoids playing d7–d6, so that he can later play d7–d5 in one move, if possible. Black also avoids the **Yugoslav Attack**, but since White has not been forced to play Nc3 yet, 5.c4 (the **Maróczy Bind**) is possible.

The Accelerated Dragon generally features a more positional style of play than many other variations of the **Sicilian**.

### 4.4.1 Main line

Position after 7.Bc4

One of the main lines continues: **5. Nc3 Bg7 6. Be3 Nf6 7. Bc4** (see diagram). At this point the most important Black continuations are 7...0-0 and 7...Qa5. White should not castle queenside after 7...Qa5, unlike in the **Yugoslav Attack**.

**7... 0-0** is the main line, after which White should proceed with **8. Bb3**. If Black plays 8...d6, White usually plays 9.f3 as in the **Yugoslav attack**. Although, Black often plays 8...a5 or 8...Qa5, after which castling queenside can be dangerous, and it is often a better idea for White to castle kingside.

### 4.4.2 Passmore Variation

Position after 9...Kxf7

Another common line that has been seen in tournaments continues: **5. Nxc6 bxc6 6. Qd4 Nf6 7. e5 Ng8 8. e6 Nf6 9. exf7 Kxf7** (see diagram). At this point both sides have equal chances. Many times the continuation 10.Bc4+ will be seen, attempting to add kingside pressure while developing a minor piece. However, Black defends easily with 10...d5 or 10...e6, resulting in a position where his king is safe. Both players can choose to play the game positionally or otherwise will have variable results. Statistically, White's best move is 10.Be2 followed with 11.0-0.

### 4.4.3 See also

- Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation
- Sicilian Defence

### 4.4.4 References

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### 4.4.5 Further reading

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- Hansen, Carsten; Nielsen, Peter Heine (2006). *Sicilian Accelerated Dragon*. Sterling Pub. ISBN 9780713489477.
- Greet, Andrew (2008). *Starting Out: The Accelerated Dragon*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1857445305.
- Understanding The Accelerated Sicilian Dragon B36
- The Accelerated Dragon, by GM Eugene Perelshteyn
- A weakness in the Accelerated Dragon

## 4.5 Sicilian, Dragon, Yugoslav attack, 9.Bc4

In chess, the move **9. Bc4** is one of the main options in the chess opening called the **Yugoslav Attack**, which is an attack in the **Dragon Variation** of the **Sicilian Defence**. Also known as the **Rauzer System** or the **St George Attack**, the Yugoslav Attack begins with the following moves:

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 d6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 g6
6. Be3 Bg7
7. f3 O-O
8. Qd2 Nc6
9. Bc4

One of Great Britain's strongest grandmasters John Emms notes that:

I can safely say that the Yugoslav Attack is the ultimate test of the **Dragon**. White quickly develops his **queenside** and **castles** long before turning his attentions to an all-out assault on the black king. To the untrained eye, this attack can look both awesome and unnerving.<sup>[1]</sup>

Statistically, **Chessgames.com**'s database of nearly 1500 master games shows Win–Draw–Loss percentages for White to be: 46%–25%–29%. Mega Database 2002 indicates that white scores 52% while 66% of the over 1200 games were decisive .

**B77**<sup>[2]</sup> is the **ECO** code for the Sicilian, Dragon, Yugoslav Attack, 9.Bc4.

### 4.5.1 Overview

White tries to break open the black **kingside** and deliver **checkmate** down the h-file, while Black seeks counterplay on the queenside with sacrificial attacks. Typical white strategies are exchanging dark squared bishops by Be3–h6, sacrificing a **pawn** and sometimes an exchange on h5, exploiting pressure on the a2–g8 diagonal, and the weakness of the d5 square.

Some typical themes for Black are exchanging White's light-square bishop by Nc6–e5–c4, pressure on the c-file, sacrificing the exchange on c3, advancing the b-pawn and pressuring the long diagonal. White will normally win a straight pawn attack, because Black has given White a hook on g6 to attack. Generally, White will avoid moving their pawns on a2/b2/c2, and so Black's pawn storm is nearly always slower than White's. Black can sometimes obtain an acceptable **endgame** even after sacrificing the exchange because of White's h-pawn sacrifice and **doubled pawns**.

The Yugoslav Attack with 9. Bc4 results in extremely tactical and decisive battles. White keeps a firm grip on the center while advancing aggressively towards the enemy king with f3–f4–f5 and even g2–g3–g4. However, danger exists in overextending and allowing Black to gain the initiative with a deadly counterattack. Black's strategy is centered around the **half-open** c-file and their ability to push the a- and b-pawns. Throughout the entire course of the battle, Black will be looking to break the center with an advance from d6–d5. Black can even sometimes obtain a winning endgame even after sacrificing the exchange, because of White's h-pawn sacrifice, doubled isolated c-pawns and most importantly the lack of mobility of the White rooks compared to the Black minor pieces.

### 4.5.2 Main line

#### 9... Bd7 10. 0-0-0

White's most popular choice. In most Yugoslav games, 0-0-0, h4, and Bb3 are all played by White but the move order matters a great deal. 10.h4 h5 transposes to the Soltis Variation but avoids the Chinese Dragon (see below), because after 10.h4 Rb8?! 11.h5! is now good for White. 10.Bb3 also usually transposes into the main lines but Black has the additional possibility of 10...Nxd4 11.Bxd4 b5 which is known as the Topalov System. White's best chances in this line at the moment involve castling short and trying for a positional edge in an atypical fashion in the Yugoslav Attack.

#### 10... Rc8 11. Bb3

10...Rc8 develops Black's rook to the open c-file, pressuring the queenside and also preparing a discovered attack on White's bishop. To avoid this, White moves the bishop out of the way with 11.Bb3. Black has also tried 10...Qb8, preparing either 11...Rc8 or 11...b5.

#### 11... Ne5 12. Kb1

12.h4 h5, commonly known as Soltis Variation, is the other main option. There are many ways for White to combat this line, but most of them have been shown to be flawed: if 13.g4?! hxg4, both 14.h5 Nxh5 and 14.f4 Nc4 do little to advance White's attack as Black would be able to keep the kingside closed. Later, White switched to 13.Bg5 Rc5, but even then the advance of the g-pawn does not promise White much: 14.g4 hxg4 15.f4!? Nc4 16.Qe2 Qc8!, a multi-purpose move which threatens ...Nxb2, increases the pressure on the c-file, prevents f4–f5 and safeguards the passed g4-pawn. In the aforementioned position, Black is better, and the old line proceeds with 14.Kb1 Re8 but theoretically, Black is doing fine. In search of an advantage, White players turned to an immediate 12.Kb1, which is probably the most threatening line at the moment.

#### 12... Re8!?

After 12.Kb1, Black's most straightforward idea is no longer effective: 12...Nc4 13.Bxc4 Rxc4 can be met with 14.g4 and White has the advantage since with the king on b1, there is no clear way for Black to counterattack. 12...a5 is also fruitless since White can respond by playing 13.a4!, stunting Black's queenside play and creating an outpost on b5. Thus, with no immediate attack available, Black picks the waiting move Re8 which allows Bh6 to be met with ...Bh8, retaining the Black's dark-square bishop. 12...Re8 also protects the e7-pawn, so that the queen is no longer tied down to its defence. This line is complex and is currently contested at the highest levels.

### 4.5.3 Black ...Qa5 lines

The main line runs: **9. Bc4 Bd7 10. 0-0-0 Qa5 11. Bb3 Rfc8 12. h4 Ne5**. This approach was originally considered the main variation and was thus given the ECO code B79 (whilst ...Rc8 was not given any). It was advocated by GM **Chris Ward** in his books *Winning with the Dragon* and *Winning with the Dragon 2*. This line has fallen slightly out of favour due to difficulties encountered in white's 12.Kb1 and the credibility of the Soltis variation in Rc8 lines mentioned above.

### 4.5.4 Chinese Dragon

The main line with **10. 0-0-0 Rc8 11. Bb3 Ne5 12. Kb1** has proven to be so effective over time that some Dragon

players have attempted to dodge the line with the interesting **10... Rb8**. This complicated line is known as the **Chinese Dragon**. The most topical line is currently **11. Bb3** which is really a degree of prophylaxis designed to prevent the sacrifice of the b-pawn immediately whilst buying time for White. Black now has the move **11... Na5** which both threatens to play 12...Nc4 13.Bxc4 bxc4, opening the b-file or just removing the bishop straight off with ...Nxb3. Originally h4 was played in this position, but recently the move **12. Bh6** has come to prominence, leading to a sharp and double-edged game in which Black has good practical chances.

### 4.5.5 Dragondorf

**10. 0-0-0 Rc8 11. Bb3 Ne5 12. Kb1 a6!?**. This was first played by the World Champion M. Botvinnik however it was thought to be too slow. Recently this move is enjoying a comeback due to good practical results for **Magnus Carlsen**, a Dragon aficionado and current world number 1 in FIDE ratings and also the current world champion.

### 4.5.6 See also

- **Sicilian Defence**
- **Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation**

### 4.5.7 References

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### 4.5.8 Further reading

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### 4.5.9 External links

- **ECO B79 Sicilian, Dragon, Yugoslav Attack, 12.h4** Chess ECO Database

## 4.6 Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation

The **Najdorf Variation**<sup>[1]</sup> (/ˈnaɪdɔːrf/) of the Sicilian Defence is one of the most respected and deeply studied of all chess openings. *Modern Chess Openings* calls it the "Cadillac" or "Rolls Royce" of chess openings. The opening is named after the Polish-Argentine grandmaster Miguel Najdorf. Many players have lived by the Najdorf (notably Bobby Fischer and Garry Kasparov, although Kasparov would often transpose into a Scheveningen).

The Najdorf begins:

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 d6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 a6

Black's 5...a6 aims to deny the b5-square to White's knights and light-square bishop while maintaining flexible development. If Black plays 5...e5?! immediately, then after 6.Bb5+! Bd7 (or 6...Nbd7 7.Nf5) 7.Bxd7+ Nbx7 8.Nf5 and the knight on f5 is difficult to dislodge without concessions.

Black's plan is usually to start a minority attack on the queenside and exert pressure on White's e4-pawn. This is often carried out by means of ...b5, ...Bb7, and placing a knight on c5, or c4 via b6.

### 4.6.1 Variations

**Main line: 6.Bg5**

**Classical Main line: 6...e6** Position after 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4

The main move. In the early days of the Najdorf 7.Qf3 was popular, but the reply 7...h6 did not allow White to obtain any real advantage. Nowadays, White players almost universally respond with the move: **7. f4**. White threatens 8.e5 winning a piece, but Black has several options:

- **7... Be7 8. Qf3** and now:
  - **8... Qc7 9. 0-0-0 Nbd7**, this is called the old main line. At this point White usually responds with **10. g4** or **10. Bd3**. After each of these moves there is a huge body of opening theory.

- **8... h6 9. Bh4 g5**. This is known as the Argentine/Goteborg Variation. It was first played in round 14 of 1955 Goteborg **Interzonal** simultaneously by Argentine players Panno, Pilnik and Najdorf who were facing the Soviet Grandmasters Geller, Spassky and Keres. The games in question proceeded as follows: **10. fxe5 Nfd7** Black aims to route a knight to e5, and then back it up by a knight at d7 or c6. **11. Nxe6!?** (Efim Geller's discovery). **11... fxe6 12. Qh5+ Kf8 13. Bb5** here Panno played 13...Ne5, while Pilnik and Najdorf chose 13...Kg7. However, all three Argentine players lost in very short order and the line was, for a while, considered refuted. It was only in 1958 that **Bobby Fischer** introduced the defensive resource **13... Rh7!**, versus **Svetozar Gligorić** at the **Portorož Interzonal**, in a critical last-round game. According to modern opening theory this position is a draw at best for White.

- **7... Qb6** one of the most popular choices at master level.
  - **8. Qd2** the extremely complicated **Poisoned Pawn Variation**: **8... Qxb2 9. Rb1** (9.Nb3 is the other less common option) **9... Qa3** and here White has played both **10. f5** and **10. e5**. Both lead to extremely sharp play where slightest inaccuracy is fatal for either side. Since 2006, when it was played in several high level games, **10. e5** has become very popular. From the standpoint of the theory it is regarded as White's only attempt to play for a win against the poisoned pawn variation since all other variations (and that includes the other pawn move: **10. f5**) have been analysed to a draw with best play. An example is the game **Vallejo Pons-Kasparov, Moscow 2004**,<sup>[2]</sup> which was called "a model modern grandmaster draw!" by Kasparov himself in *Revolution in the 70s* (page 164).
  - **8. Nb3** White opts for a quiet game, but Black has nothing to worry about: **8... Be7 9. Qf3 Nbd7 10. 0-0-0 Qc7** where we have reached a set up very similar to that of the old main line mentioned above. However, without the d4-knight White will find it very hard to organise an attack.
- **7... b5** the ultra-sharp **Polugaevsky Variation**.<sup>[3]</sup> Black ignores White's threat and expands in Queenside. **8. e5 dxe5 9. fxe5 Qc7** here White either plays **10. exf6 Qe5+ 11. Be2 Qxg5** or **10. Qe2 Nfd7 11. 0-0-0 Bb7**.
- **7... Qc7** championed by **Garry Kasparov** before he switched to playing 7...Qb6 exclusively.

- **7... Nbd7** popularised by **Boris Gelfand**.
- **7... Nc6??** is risky and of a dubious theoretical reputation due to the response: **8. e5!**
- **7... h6!?** the Poisoned Pawn Deferred. This variation is very popular at the moment.

**Verbeterde List: 6...Nbd7** Position after 6.Bg5 Nbd7 7.Bc4

Historically speaking, this was the usual reply until the mid-1960s, when the rejoinder 7.Bc4 put the move “out of business”. Recently however, ideas have been found by some Dutch players who call this variation *De Verbeterde List* (“The Improved Strategem”). The idea for Black is to postpone ...e6 in order to retain more dynamic options (for example, to play e7–e5 in one move). The idea was tested by Petrosian, Belov, and others, but received popular attention and developed rapidly after use by Dutch player Lody Kuling in 2007. The most important developments include:

- **7. f4 Qc7 8. Qf3:**
  - **8... h6 9. Bh4 e5.** A setup discovered by Lody Kuling. (This variation is covered by Ufuk Tuncer and Twan Burg in *New In Chess, Yearbook 102*.) The idea is to gain time over ...e6 by playing e7–e5 in one move. Later on it turned out that 9...g5! is even better.
  - **8... b5** is the **Neo Verbeterde List**. This is a new way to play the Verbeterde List. It includes fianchettoing the bishop to b7. (The variation is covered by Ufuk Tuncer in *New In Chess, Yearbook 101*.)
- **7. Bc4 Qb6** This is a move introduced by **Lenier Dominguez**. The idea is to win a tempo by attacking b2, after which Black can finish his development beginning 8...e6. The last word on the line has not yet been given. The whole variation with **6... Nbd7** is covered in the book by **Lubomír Ftáčnik** in the chapter “Blood Diamond”.
- **7. f4/Qe2 g6: Grischuk’s Verbeterde List.** Another modern way to meet both 7.f4 and 7.Qe2. The idea is to castle kingside rapidly and then start to attack with b5–b4, while wasting no time with the e-pawn.

#### English Attack: 6.Be3

Position after 6.Be3

This has become the modern main line. Since the early 1990s, the English Attack, **6. Be3** followed by f3, g4, Qd2 and 0-0-0 in some order, has become extremely popular and has been intensively analysed. Black has three main options:

- The classical **6... e5**. After **7. Nb3**, Black usually continues **7... Be6**, trying to control the d5-square. The most common move is then **8. f3**, allowing White to play Qd2 next move. If White had tried to play **8. Qd2**, then Black could respond with **8... Ng4**. Instead White can play **7.Nf3**, in which case Black’s main choices are 7...Be7 and 7...Qc7.
- Trying to transpose to the **Scheveningen** by playing **6... e6**. White can either opt for the standard English attack by playing **7. f3** or try the even sharper Hungarian attack (also known as Perenyi attack) by playing **7. g4**.
- The knight move: **6... Ng4**. White continues with: **7. Bg5 h6 8. Bh4 g5 9. Bg3 Bg7** but the nature of this position is quite different from the ones arising after **6... e6** and **6... e5** so sometimes White tries to avoid the knight jump by playing **6. f3** instead of **6. Be3**. However, aside from eliminating the option to play the Hungarian attack mentioned above, it gives Black other possibilities such as **6... Qb6** and **6... b5** instead.
- The Verbeterde List approach: **6... Nbd7**. The idea of this move is to get into the English attack while avoiding the Perenyi attack. **7. g4** is less dangerous now because with **6... Nbd7** black is more flexible as the bishop on c8 can attack g4 now and the knight on d7 can jump to interesting squares.

#### Fischer–Sozin Attack: 6.Bc4

Introduced by **Veniamin Sozin** in the 1930s, this received little attention until Fischer regularly adopted it, and it was a frequent guest at the top level through the 1970s. White plays **6. Bc4** with the idea of playing against f7, so Black counters with **6... e6 7. Bb3 b5**. The Sozin has become less popular because of **6... e6 7. Bb3 Nbd7** where Black intends to follow up with ...Ne5 later. It is possible to avoid the Nbd7 option with **7. 0-0**, but this cuts the aggressive possibility to castle long.

#### Classical/Opocensky Variation: 6.Be2

Because of the success of various players with these variations, White often plays **6. Be2** and goes for a quieter, more positional game, whereupon Black has the option of transposing into a **Scheveningen Variation** by playing **6... e6** or keeping the game in Najdorf lines by playing **6... e5**.

Another option is to play **6... Nbd7**, in the spirit of The Verbeterde List. It is for this reason that this variation is called **The Verbeterde List Unlimited**.

#### Amsterdam Variation: 6.f4

6. f4

Some lines include:

6...e5 7.Nf3 Nbd7 8.a4 Be7 9.Bd3 0-0

6...Qc7 7.Bd3

6...e6 7.Be2

GM **Daniel King** recommends 6...g6 against the Amsterdam Variation, leading to a more defensive kingside pawn structure. The idea is to eventually counterattack on the g1-a7 diagonal with a move like Qb6, preventing white from castling.<sup>[4]</sup> An example line would be 6...g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.a4 Nc6 (note 8...Nc6 as opposed to the usual Najdorf Nbd7, as c6 is a more flexible square for the knight with a queen on b6) 9.Bd3 Qb6.

#### The Adams Attack: 6.h3

Introduced by **Weaver Adams** during the middle of the twentieth century, this odd looking pawn move has mostly been used as a surprise weapon to combat the Najdorf. Should Black continue with 6...e5 anyway, White can respond with 7.Nde2 following up with g4 and Ng3, fighting for the weak light squares by playing g5. It is thus recommended that Black prevents g4 altogether with 7...h5.

Black can also employ a Scheveningen setup with 6...e6 followed by 7.g4 b5 8.Bg2 Bb7, forcing White to lose more time by defending the e4 pawn, since b4 is a threat. It was not until the early 2008 when an answer to Black was finally found. After 9.0-0 b4, White has the positional sacrifice 10.Nd5!, which gives Black long term weaknesses and an open e-file for White to play on. Since then, it has been popular on all levels of chess.

#### Other sixth moves for White

Beside the main lines mentioned above White has other options: **6. f3** and **6. g3** are less common, but are also respected responses to the Najdorf. Moves such as **6. a4**, **6. Bd3**, **6. a3**, **6. Nb3**, **6. Rg1** (the Petronic Attack), **6. Qf3**, and **6. Qe2** are rarely played, but are not so bad and may be used for surprise value.

#### 4.6.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

#### 4.6.3 References

- [1] "Sicilian, Najdorf (B90)". *Chess openings*. Chess-games.com. Retrieved 2008-01-19.
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- [3] "Sicilian, Najdorf (B96)". *Chess openings*. Chess-games.com. Retrieved 2008-01-19. (also known as **Najdorf, Polugayevsky Variation**)
- [4] King, Daniel. *Power Play 18: The Sicilian Najdorf*.

#### 4.6.4 Further reading

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- Geller, Efim; Glisgoric, Svetozar; Kavalek, Lubomir; Spassky, Boris (1976). *The Najdorf Variation of the Sicilian Defense*. RHM Press. ISBN 0890580251. Cite uses deprecated parameter lcoauthors= (help)
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- Emms, John (2003). *Play the Najdorf: Scheveningen Style*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-323-3.
- de Firmian, Nick; Fedorowicz, John (2004). *The English Attack*. Sterling. ISBN 978-0945806141.

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- Palliser, Richard (2007). *Starting Out: Sicilian Najdorf*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-601-2.
- Rizzitano, James (2010). *Play the Najdorf Sicilian*. Gambit Publications. ISBN 978-1-906454-16-6.
- Ftacnik, Lubomir (2010). *The Sicilian Defence*. Quality Chess. ISBN 978-1-906552-08-4.
- *Yearbook 101*. New In Chess. 2011. ISBN 9056913611.
- *Yearbook 102*. New In Chess. 2012. ISBN 9056913638.

#### 4.6.5 External links

- Comprehensive engine analysis of White's response to the Najdorf
- Najdorf Variation video and analysis
- Najdorf Variation at ChessGames.com
- Sicilian Defense Najdorf Variation, English Attack (B90) – Openings – Chess.com

### 4.7 Sicilian Defence, Scheveningen Variation

In the opening of a game of chess, the **Scheveningen Variation**<sup>[1]</sup> of the Sicilian Defence is a line of the Open Sicilian characterised by Black setting up a “small centre” with pawns on d6 and e6. There are numerous move orders that reach the Scheveningen. One possible move order is:

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 d6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 e6

The seemingly modest d6–e6 pawn centre affords Black provide a solid defensive barrier, control of the critical d5- and e5-squares, and retains flexibility to break in the centre

with either ...e5 or ...d5. Black can proceed with rapid development and the opening provides sound counterchances and considerable scope for creativity.

The line has been championed by Garry Kasparov, among many other distinguished grandmasters.

#### 4.7.1 Origin

The variation first came under international attention during the 1923 chess tournament in the village Scheveningen at the North Sea coast near The Hague. During the tournament the variation was played several times by several players, including Euwe playing it against Maroczy.

#### 4.7.2 Keres Attack: 6.g4

Keres Attack after 8.Rg1

White has several different attacking schemes available, but the one considered most dangerous is the Keres Attack,<sup>[2]</sup> named after GM Paul Keres, which continues **6. g4**. This move takes advantage of the fact that 5...e6 cuts off the black bishop's control of g4, and plans to force the knight on f6, Black's only developed piece, to retreat and force black into passivity. This also launches White into a kingside attack. Black usually continues with **6... h6** to stop White's expansion. Previously moves like 6...Nc6 or 6...a6 were also recommended for Black but practical tests have shown that White's offensive is too dangerous to be ignored. **7. h4** is strongest and the most popular. 7.g5 hxg5 8.Bxg5 Nc6 9.Qd2 Qb6 10.Nb3 a6 11.0-0-0 Bd7 12.h4 gives White an equal game at best. **7... Nc6 8. Rg1** (diagram) and here Black has two main lines to choose from:

- **8... d5** 9.Bb5 Bd7 10.exd5 Nxd5 11.Nxd5 exd5 12.Qe2+ Be7 13.Nf5 Bxf5 14.gxf5 Kf8 15.Be3 Qa5+
- **8... h5** 9.gxh5 Nxh5 10.Bg5 Nf6 11.Qd2

both of which may give White a slight edge.

#### 4.7.3 Classical Variation: 6.Be2

Classical Variation after 12.Bf3

Another very popular variation is the Classical<sup>[3]</sup> (also known as *Maroczy Variation*) which is initiated by **6. Be2**. Used to great effect by Anatoly Karpov, among other distinguished grandmasters, this methodical approach has gained many followers. The main line continues **6... a6 7. 0-0**

**Be7 8. Be3 0-0 9. f4 Qc7 10. a4 Nc6 11. Kh1 Re8 12. Bf3** (diagram) reaching one of the main tabiyas of the Classical Scheveningen. White's plans here are to build up a kingside attack, typically by means of g2–g4–g5, Qd1–e1–h4, Bg2, Qh5, Rf3–h3, etc. Black will aim for a diversion on the **queenside** via the semi-open c-file, or strike in the centre. Positional pawn sacrifices abound for both sides and the theory is very highly developed, thanks to decades of research by the most elite players such as Garry Kasparov, Vasily Smyslov, Anatoly Karpov, Viswanathan Anand, Veselin Topalov, Boris Gelfand and many others.

#### 4.7.4 English Attack: 6.Be3

English Attack after 10.0-0-0 Bb7

The currently fashionable approach is the so-called “English Attack”,<sup>[4]</sup> modeled after the Yugoslav (Rauzer) Attack in the **Sicilian Dragon**. White starts an aggressive pawn storm on the kingside with f2–f3, g2–g4, h2–h4, and often g4–g5. White castles long and a very sharp game is often the result. Black, however, does not have to acquiesce to passive defence and has at least as many attacking threats. The main line continues **6. Be3 a6 7. f3 b5 8. g4 h6 9. Qd2 Nbd7 10. 0-0-0 Bb7**. White's plans are to force g4–g5 and open the kingside files to his advantage. The first player may also exert considerable pressure on the d-file. Black will often consider an **exchange sacrifice** or at least a pawn sacrifice to open the queenside files for the heavy pieces. Time is of the essence and new ideas are discovered each year. Many elite players including Alexander Morozevich, Peter Leko, and Alexei Shirov have poured many hours of study into this critical variation.

#### 4.7.5 Other variations

##### Fischer-Sozin Attack: 6.Bc4

With the Fischer-Sozin Attack **6. Bc4**,<sup>[5][6]</sup> White tries to pressure the d5-square directly. Viable Black responses in the centre include variations of Nb8–c6–a5 or Nb8–d7–c5, supplemented by a7–a6 and b7–b5–b4 on the queenside. A possible line is 6...Be7 7.Bb3 0-0 8.Be3 Na6 (aiming for the c5-square; note that in case 8...Nbd7, then 9.Bxe6!? fxe6 10.Nxe6 Qa5 11.Nxf8 Bxf8, and White sacrifices two pieces for a rook) 9.Qe2 Nc5 10.f3. The ensuing position is balanced, with Black ready to counter White's g2–g4–g5 with a7–a6 and b7–b5–b4 on the other flank.

##### Tal Variation: 6.f4

After **6. f4**,<sup>[7]</sup> in one of the main lines, **6... Nc6 7. Be3 Be7 8. Qf3**, White seeks to castle queenside placing his rook on the half-open d-file, and support the g-pawn's advance with the queen.

##### Minor lines

**6. g3; 6. Bb5**, etc. These moves are less difficult to meet and are not theoretically challenging to Black.

#### 4.7.6 Question of move orders and the Najdorf Variation

The Keres Attack puts Black into a rather defensive and potentially dangerous position. For this reason, many advocates of this defense tend to play the **Najdorf Variation** move order and then play 6...e6, transposing into the Scheveningen. The most prominent example of such a preference for the Najdorf move order was seen in **World Chess Championship 1984**, where after game one when Kasparov had difficulties in the opening, he never allowed the Keres Attack and finally switched to the Najdorf move order. One should note that the Najdorf move order, while eliminating 6.g4, still gives White additional options, and g4 is still a possibility a move after.

Much modern analysis of the Scheveningen is under the rubric of the **Najdorf**. In fact, many books exploring the Scheveningen today have Najdorf in the title. This, continuing the line of thinking in the English section above, is technically the Najdorf Variation of the Sicilian defense with the very popular English Attack. Note that the “Modern” Scheveningen only covers lines without an early ...a6 from Black. The “Classical” Scheveningen includes the early ...a6. This distinction is important in choosing books to study, as titles covering recent games will often leave out the ...a6 early line, which can still become quite interesting and complex, and still advantageous for Black, even with the powerful English Attack. Many modern chess software programs, such as **HIARCS**, still play ...a6 early on, despite the fact that “modern” often precludes the line in definitive analysis, depending on the book. **Vlastimil Jansa** has advocated this variation.<sup>[8][9][10]</sup>

#### 4.7.7 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 4.7.8 References

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- [2] “*Sicilian, Keres Attack (B81)*”. *Chess openings*. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2008-01-19.
- [3] “*Sicilian, Scheveningen, Classical (B85)*”. *Chess openings*. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2008-01-19.
- [4] “*The English Attack*”. Retrieved 2008-01-19.
- [5] “*Sicilian, Fischer–Sozin Attack (B86)*”. *Chess openings*. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2008-01-19.
- [6] “*Sicilian, Fischer–Sozin Attack (B88)*”. *Chess openings*. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2008-01-19.
- [7] “*Sicilian, Scheveningen (B82)*”. *Chess openings*. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2008-01-19. (known as *Tal Variation*)
- [8] Nunn, John. “*Play the Najdorf: Scheveningen Style-A Complete Repertoire for Black in this Most Dynamic of Openings (9781857443233)*”. John Emms: Books”. Amazon.com. Retrieved 2012-01-12.
- [9] Williams, Simon. “*Dynamics of Chess Strategy (9780713486087)*”. Vlastimil Jansa: Books”. Amazon.com. Retrieved 2012-01-12.
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### 4.7.9 Further reading

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## 4.8 Chekhov Sicilian

The **Sicilian Defence, Chekhov Variation** (also sometimes called the **Szily Variation** or **Hungarian Variation**) is a chess opening named after Vitaly Chekhov, from the game Chekhov–Lisitsin, Leningrad 1938.<sup>[1]</sup> It is defined by the moves:

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 d6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Qxd4

On move four **White** ignores the standard opening principle to not develop the **queen** too early in the game. Although the Chekhov Variation is somewhat rare at **grandmaster** level, it is not uncommon among amateurs.<sup>[2]</sup>

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) assigns code B53 to this opening.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 4.8.1 Main line: 4...Nc6

Black’s main response to the Chekhov Variation is **4...Nc6** immediately attacking White’s queen, leading to:

- **5. Bb5** pinning the knight: 5...Bd7 6.Bxc6 Bxc6.
- **5. Qa4?!** avoiding an exchange and keeping the light-square bishop.

### 4.8.2 Other continuations

- **4... a6** prevents a future pin: 5.c4 Nc6 6.Qd1.
- **4... Bd7** prepares 5...Nc6.
- **4... Nf6** avoids exchanges and continues with development.

### 4.8.3 Example games

Evgeni Vasiukov vs Loek van Wely, 2002

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Nc6 5.Bb5 Bd7 6.Bxc6 Bxc6 7.Nc3 Nf6 8.Bg5 e6 9.O-O-O Be7 10.Rhe1 O-O 11.Kb1 Qa5 12.Qd2 Qa6 13.Nd4 Rfc8 14.f4 h6 15.h4 Qc4 16.g4 Kf8 17.f5 hxg5 18.hxg5 Nd7 19.fxe6 Ne5 20.Rh1 fxe6 21.b3 Qb4 22.Rh8 Kf7 23.Qf4 Bf6 24.Rh7 Kg8 25.gxf6 Kxh7 26.Qg5 Rc7 27.Nxe6 Rac8 28.fxg7 Kg8 29.Rh1 Bxe4 30.Rh8 Kf7 31.Nxc7 Qxc3 32.g8=Q<sup>[4]</sup>

Mikhail Tal vs Robert Eugene Byrne, 1976

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. Qxd4 Nc6 5.Bb5 Bd7 6.Bxc6 Bxc6 7.Nc3 Nf6 8.Bg5 e6 9.O-O-O Be7 10.Rhe1 O-O 11.Qd2 Qa5 12.Nd4 Rac8 13.Kb1 Kh8 14.f4 h6 15.h4 hxg5 16.hxg5 Nxe4 17.Qd3 Bxg5 18.Nxe4 Bxe4 19.Rxe4 Bh6 20.g4 f5 21.Rxe6 Bxf4 22.Nxf5<sup>[5]</sup>

### 4.8.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 4.8.5 References

- [1] Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992), *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.), Oxford University Press, p. 75, ISBN 0-19-280049-3
- [2] The Chekhover Variation chessgames.com Chess Opening Explorer
- [3] Sicilian ECO: B53
- [4] Evgeni Vasiukov vs Loek van Wely (2002) chessgames.com
- [5] Mikhail Tal vs Robert Eugene Byrne (1976) chessgames.com

## 4.9 Wing Gambit

In chess, **Wing Gambit** is a generic name given to openings in which White plays an early b4, deflecting an enemy pawn or bishop from c5 so as to regain control of d4, an important central square. (Or in which Black plays ...b5, but Wing Gambits offered by Black are very rare.)

The most common Wing Gambit is in the **Sicilian Defence** (1.e4 c5 2.b4). The most important Wing Gambit is the **Evans Gambit** (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4), treated separately.

### 4.9.1 In the Sicilian Defence

The Wing Gambit in the **Sicilian Defence** runs 1.e4 c5 2.b4 (see diagram). After Black takes with 2...cxb4, the usual continuation is 3.a3 bxa3 (3...d5! is more recently considered superior, when White must avoid 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.axb4?? Qe5+ winning the rook, a blunder actually seen in tournament play in Shirazi–Peters, Berkeley 1986; instead 5.Nf3 is better) and now the main line is 4.Nxa3, though 4.Bxa3 and 4.d4 are also seen. It is also possible to decline (or at least delay acceptance of) the gambit with 2...d5.

For his pawn, White gets quicker development and a central advantage, but it is not generally considered one of White's better choices against the Sicilian and it is virtually never seen at the professional level. Amongst amateurs it is more common, though still not so popular as other systems.

After Black's 2...cxb4, another popular third move alternative for White is 3.d4. GMs George Koltanowski, David Bronstein and World Champion Alexander Alekhine have played this line.

White can postpone the gambit one move by playing the Wing Gambit Deferred, playing 2.Nf3 followed by 3.b4. The deferred Wing Gambit is considered to be best when black responds 2...e6.<sup>[1]</sup> The Portsmouth Gambit runs

2.Nf3 Nc6 3.b4, where Black is disinclined to refuse the gambit due to the positional threat 3.b5, displacing the knight and disrupting Black's smooth development.

It is also possible to prepare the gambit by playing 2.a3!? followed by 3.b4.

### 4.9.2 In other openings

There are two Wing Gambits in the **French Defence**, 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.b4 and 1.e4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.e5 c5 4.b4. They can transpose into each other, and both are quite rare. A related idea is found in the **Caro-Kann Defence** after 1.e4 c6 2.Ne2 d5 3.e5 c5 4.b4, however Black can immediately achieve an advantage by playing 4...d4! (this move is also strong in the second French line given above). Even rarer is the Wing Gambit in the **Bishop's Opening**, 1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 Bc5 3.b4, which has some resemblance to the **Evans Gambit**.

There are several other "Wing Gambits" in various openings, but they are very rare, and not as notable as the openings mentioned above:

- In the **English Opening**: 1.c4 c5 2.b4, or 1.c4 b5
- In the **Marshall Gambit** of the **Scandinavian Defence**: 1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.d4 g6 4.c4 b5
- In the **Ware Opening**: 1.a4 b5 2.axb5 Bb7

### 4.9.3 Illustrative Games

Lutz vs. De Firmian, Biel 1993: 1.e4 c5 2.b4 cxb4 3.a3 d5! 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.Nf3 e5 6.axb4 Bxb4 7.c3 Be7 8.Na3 Nf6 9.Nb5 Qd8 10.Nxe5 Nc6 11.Nxc6 bxc6 12.Qf3 Bd7 13.Nd4 0-0 14.Ba6 Qc7 15.h3 c5 16.Nf5 Qe5 17.Ne3 Bd6 18.Be2 Bc7 19.Nc4 Qe6 20.Qe3 Ne4 21.0-0 Rfe8 22.Bd3 f5 23.Re1 Qd5 24.Qf3 Bb5 25.Nb2 c4 26.Bf1 Bb6 27.Nd1 f4 28.Qxf4 Nxf2 29.Ne3 Nd3 30.Bxd3 Qxd3 31.Kh1 Re4 32.Qg5 Bc6 33.Bb2 Qxd2 34.Rad1 Rxe3 25.Rxd2 Rxh3# 0-1 <sup>[2]</sup>

### 4.9.4 References

- [1] Beating the Anti-Sicilians, Joe Gallagher, 1994, ISBN 9780805035759
- [2] Beating the Anti-Sicilians, Joe Gallagher, 1994, ISBN 9780805035759

### 4.9.5 External links

- Opening Report: 1.e4 c5 2.b4 cxb4 3.d4 d5 (328 games)

- The Portsmouth Gambit
- A little known retreat in the Wing Gambit

## 4.10 Smith-Morra Gambit

In **chess**, the **Smith–Morra Gambit** (or simply **Morra Gambit**) is an **opening gambit** against the **Sicilian Defence** distinguished by the moves:

1. e4 c5
2. d4 cxd4
3. c3

White sacrifices a pawn to develop quickly and create attacking chances. In exchange for the gambit pawn, White has a piece developed after 4.Nxc3 and a **pawn** in the center, while Black has an extra pawn and a central pawn majority. The plan for White is straightforward and consists of placing the **bishop** on c4 to attack the f7-square, and controlling both the c- and d-files with **rooks**, taking advantage of the fact that Black can hardly find a suitable place to post their queen.

The Smith–Morra is uncommon in **grandmaster** games, but is popular at club level.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 4.10.1 History

The Smith–Morra is named after Pierre Morra (1900–1969) from France,<sup>[5]</sup> and **Ken Smith** (1930–1999) of the **Dallas Chess Club**.<sup>[6]</sup> Hence in Europe the name Morra Gambit is preferred; names like Tartakower Gambit and Matulovic Gambit have disappeared.

Morra published a booklet and several articles about the Smith–Morra around 1950. Smith wrote a total of nine books and forty-nine articles about the gambit. When Smith participated in an international tournament against several top grandmasters in **San Antonio** in 1972, he essayed the opening three times, against **Donald Byrne**, **Larry Evans**, and **Henrique Mecking**, but lost all three games.

### 4.10.2 Continuations overview

Black has a wide choice of reasonable defences after 1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3. White sometimes plays 2.Nf3 and 3.c3, which depending on Black's response may rule out certain lines.

### 4.10.3 Morra Gambit Accepted: 3...dxc3

#### 4.Nxc3

- Classical Main line: 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.Bc4 e6 7.0-0 Nf6 8.Qe2 Be7 9.Rd1 e5 10.h3 or 10.Be3
- Scheveningen setup: 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.Bc4 e6 7.0-0 Nf6 (or Be7) 8.Qe2 a6 9.Rd1 Qc7 (probably inferior Qa5) 10.Bf4 (10.Bg5) Be7
- Siberian Variation: 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 e6 6.Bc4 Nf6 and 7...Qc7, with the idea being after 7.0-0 Qc7 8.Qe2 Ng4!, 9.h3?? loses to the famous "**Siberian Trap**" 9...Nd4!, winning the queen. If instead White plays 9.Rd1, preventing 9...Nd4, black can continue with 9...Bc5 with a clearly better game.
- Nge7 variations: 4...Nc6 (or 4...e6) 5.Nf3 e6 6.Bc4 a6 (Nge7) 7.0-0 Nge7 (d6 8.Qe2 Nge7 9.Bg5 h6) 8.Bg5 f6 9.Be3
- 6...a6 Defence: 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.Bc4 a6 eventually 7...Bg4
- Fianchetto: 4...g6 (4...Nc6 5.Nf3 g6 allows 6.h4!?) 5.Nf3 Bg7 6.Bc4 Nc6
- Chicago Defence: 4...e6 5.Bc4 a6 6.Nf3 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.0-0 and Black plays ...Ra7 at some stage
- Early queenside fianchetto: 4...e6 5.Bc4 a6 6.Nf3 b5 7.Bb3 Bb7

#### 4.Bc4

- This line is similar to the **Danish Gambit**: 4...cxb2 5.Bxb2

### 4.10.4 Morra Gambit Declined

- Advance Variation: 3...d3
- First transposition to the **Alapin**: 3...Nf6 4.e5 Nd5
- Second transposition to the **Alapin**: 3...d5 4.exd5 Qxd5 (Nf6) 5.cxd4

The latter has a bad reputation, as square c3 is free for the knight. Still 5...Nf6 (5...e5; 5...Nc6 6.Nf3 e5) 6.Nf3 e6 7.Nc3 Qd6 is likely to transpose to a main line of the **Alapin**: 2.c3 d5 3.exd5 Qxd5 4.d4 e6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.Bd3 Nc6 7.0-0 cxd4 8.cxd4 Be7 9.Nc3 Qd6.

### 4.10.5 See also

- Another anti-Sicilian gambit is the **Wing Gambit** (1.e4 c5 2.b4).
- [List of chess openings](#)
- [List of chess openings named after people](#)

### 4.10.6 Notes

- [1] The latest (2002) edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, volume B, classifies all lines beginning 1.e4 c5 2.d4, including the Smith-Morra Gambit, under B20.<sup>[1]</sup> However, *Chess Informant* gives B21 as the code for 1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3 in its guide to the ECO opening codes provided on its website<sup>[2]</sup> and has classified games featuring the Smith-Morra Gambit under B21 in its more recent publications.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 4.10.7 References

- [1] Krnic, Zdenko; Matanovic, Aleksandar (2002). *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings, volume B* (4th ed.). Belgrade: Chess Informant. ISBN 978-8672970500.
- [2] “Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings Classification Code Index” (PDF). Chess Informant. Retrieved 1 July 2015.
- [3] Matanovic, Aleksandar, ed. (2013). *Chess Informant 118*. Belgrade: Chess Informant. p. 195. ISBN 978-8672970685.
- [4] [http://chess.about.com/od/openings/ss/Sicilian\\_2.htm](http://chess.about.com/od/openings/ss/Sicilian_2.htm)
- [5] Chess Notes by Edward Winter, entry 3953 (“Morra”)
- [6] Kenneth Ray Smith (1930–1999) Obituary at the US Chess Federation

### 4.10.8 Further reading

- Flesch, János (1981). *The Morra (Smith) Gambit*. Batsford. ISBN 0-7134-2188-6.
- Burgess, Graham (1994). *Winning with the Smith-Morra Gambit*. Batsford. ISBN 0805035745.
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- Langrock, Hannes (2006). *The Modern Morra Gambit*. Russell Enterprises. ISBN 1-888690-32-1.

### 4.10.9 External links

- [The Smith–Morra gambit](#)

## Chapter 5

# e4 Openings – Other variations

### 5.1 Bishop's Opening

The **Bishop's Opening** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Bc4

White attacks Black's f7-square and prevents Black from advancing his d-pawn to d5. By ignoring the beginner's maxim "develop knights before bishops", White leaves his f-pawn unblocked, allowing the possibility of playing f2–f4.

The f2–f4 push gives the Bishop's Opening an affinity with the **King's Gambit** and the **Vienna Game**, two openings that share this characteristic. The Bishop's Opening can transpose into either of these openings, and in particular a favorable variation of the King's Gambit, but with care Black can circumvent this. Transpositions into **Giuoco Piano** and **Two Knights Defense** and other openings are also possible.

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) assigns Bishop's Opening the codes C23 and C24.

#### 5.1.1 History and use

The Bishop's Opening is one of the oldest openings to be analyzed; it was studied by **Lucena** and **Ruy Lopez**. Later it was played by **Philidor**. **Larsen** was one of the few grandmasters to play it often, after first using it at the 1964 **Interzonal Tournament**. Although the Bishop's Opening is uncommon today, it has been used occasionally as a surprise by players such as **Kasparov**. **Nunn** uses it to avoid **Petrov's Defence** (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6),<sup>[1]</sup> and **Lékó** played it in the 2007 **World Championship** against **Kramnik**, known to consistently play the Petrov.

**Weaver Adams** in his classic work "White to Play and Win" claimed that the Bishop's Opening was a win for White by

force from the second move.<sup>[2]</sup> However, he was unable to prove this by defeating players stronger than himself, and later abandoned the Bishop's Opening for the **Vienna Game**, making the same claim.<sup>[3]</sup> Grandmaster **Nick de Firmian**, in the 14th edition of *Modern Chess Openings* concludes that the Bishop's Opening leads to equality with best play by both sides,<sup>[4]</sup> and notes that, "Among modern players only **Bent Larsen** has played it much, but even **Kasparov** gave it a whirl (winning against **Bareev**)."<sup>[5]</sup>

#### 5.1.2 Main variations

Because White's second move makes no direct threat, Black has many possible responses on the second move. As shown below, the Bishop's Opening offers opportunities to transpose to several other open games.

##### Berlin Defense: 2...Nf6

Probably Black's most popular second move is 2...Nf6, forcing White to decide how to defend his e-pawn.

##### Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit 3.Nf3 Nxe4 4.Nc3

After 3.d3 Black must be careful not to drift into an inferior variation of the **King's Gambit Declined**. One continuation that avoids this pitfall is 2...Nf6 3.d3 c6 4.Nf3 d5 5.Bb3 Bd6. Also possible is 3...d6 (instead of 3...c6) 4.f4 exf4 5.Bxf4 Be6! neutralizing White's king bishop.

White sometimes chooses the Bishop's Opening move order to transpose into the **Giuoco Piano** while preventing Black from playing **Petrov's Defense**. For example, 2...Nf6 3.d3 Nc6 4.Nf3 Bc5 reaches the quiet **Giuoco Pianissimo**.

The **Urusov Gambit** is named after Russian Prince Sergey Semyonovich Urusov (1827–1897). After 2...Nf6 3.d4 exd4 (3...Nxe4 4.dxe5 gives White some advantage) 4.Nf3, Black can transpose to the **Two Knights Defense** with 4...Nc6, or can decline the gambit with 4...d5 5.exd5 Bb4+ 6.c3 (6.Kf1 is recommended by Michael Goeller, winning

a pawn at the expense of castling rights) 6...Qe7+ 7.Be2 dxc3, when 8.bxc3 and 8.Nxc3 both offer approximately equal chances. Instead, Black can accept the gambit with 4...Nxe4 5.Qxd4 Nf6 (5...Nd6? 6.0-0 gives White an overwhelming attack), and White will continue with Nc3, Bg5, Qh4, 0-0-0, and usually intends to meet ...0-0 and ...h6 with the piece sacrifice Bxh6, exposing the black king. Black has a solid position with no clear weaknesses but White has attacking chances and piece activity as compensation for the pawn. The Urusov Gambit is also occasionally reached via the **Petrov Defence** after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4.

The **Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit** is named after English player and chess writer **Samuel Boden** and **Lionel Kieseritzky**. Boden published the first analysis of it in 1851. Opening theoreticians consider that after 2...Nf6 3.Nf3 Nxe4 4.Nc3 Nxc3 5.dxc3 f6, White's attack is not quite worth a pawn. The game may continue 6.0-0 Nc6 (not 6...Be7? 7.Nxe5! with a tremendous attack, but 6...d6 is also playable) 7.Nh4 g6 8.f4 f5 9.Nf3 (9.Nxf5? d5!) e4 10.Ng5 (10.Ne5 Qe7! threatening Qc5+ is strong) Bc5+. In practice, Black's lack of development and inability to castle kingside can prove very problematic.

Safer for Black are **Paul Morphy's** solid 5...c6 6.Nxe5 d5, returning the pawn with equality, and 4...Nc6!? (instead of 4...Nxc3) 5.0-0 (5.Nxe4 d5) Nxc3 6.dxc3 Qe7! when, according to **Bobby Fischer** in *My 60 Memorable Games*, "White has no compensation for the Pawn."<sup>[6]</sup>

Black can also decline the pawn with 3...Nc6, transposing into the **Two Knights Defense**. He must, however, be willing to offer a gambit himself after 4.Ng5. White may invite an offshoot of the Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit with 4.0-0 Nxe4 5.Nc3.

Irregular move orders are 2.Nc3 (Vienna) Nf6 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Nf3 and 2.Nf3 Nf6 (Russian or Petrov Defence) 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Nf3.

#### Summary after 2...Nf6 Greco Gambit 3.f4

- 3.Nc3 (Vienna Game, by transposition)
- 3.d3
- 3.d4 (Ponziani's Gambit)
  - 3...exd4 4.Qxd4 Nc6 (Center Game, by transposition)
  - 3...exd4 4.Nf3 (Urusov Gambit)
    - 4...Bc5 5.0-0 Nc6 (Max Lange Attack, by transposition)
    - 4...Nc6 (Two Knights Defense, by transposition)

- 4...Nxe4 5.Qxd4 (Urusov Gambit Accepted)

- 3.Nf3 (**Petrov's Defense**, by transposition)
  - 3...Nxe4 4.Nc3 (**Boden–Kieseritzky Gambit**)
- 3.f4 (Greco Gambit)
  - 3...Nxe4 4.d3 Nd6 5.Bb3 Nc6 or 5...e4
  - 3...exf4 (**King's Gambit**, by transposition)

#### Classical Defense: 2...Bc5

3.d3

The **Classical Defense** is Black's symmetrical response, 2...Bc5. White can then transpose into the **Vienna Game** (3.Nc3) or the **Giuoco Piano** (3.Nf3), or remain in the Bishop's Opening with the **Wing Gambit** (3.b4) or the **Philidor Variation** (3.c3). The main line of the Philidor Variation runs: 3. c3 Nf6 4. d4 exd4 5. e5 d5! 6. exf6 dxc4 7. Qh5 0-0 8. Qxc5 Re8+ 9. Ne2 d3 10.Be3 Transpositions into the **King's Gambit Declined** and the **Giuoco Piano** are also possible after 3.d3.

The **Wing Gambit** results in positions similar to those in the **Evans Gambit**. It can transpose into the Evans Gambit, for instance by 3.b4 Bxb4 4.c3 Ba5 5.Nf3 Nc6.

Black's most energetic response to the Philidor Variation is the **Lewis Countergambit**, 3.c3 d5, named for the **English** player and author **William Lewis** (1787–1870) who published analysis of the line in 1834.

Among amateurs, 3.Qf3 and 3.Qh5 are also popular, threatening an immediate **scholar's mate**. But the threat is easily met (e.g. 3.Qh5 Qe7) and the moves are considered inferior since they hamper White's development or leave the queen exposed, leading to loss of tempo.

#### Summary after 2...Bc5

- 3.b4 (**Wing Gambit**)
- 3.c3 (Philidor Variation)
  - 3...d5 (Lewis Countergambit)
  - 3...d6
  - 3...Nf6
- 3.Nc3 (Vienna Game, by transposition)
- 3.d3
- 3.Nf3 Nc6 (**Giuoco Piano**, by transposition)
- 3.Qg4

## Other Black responses

Philidor Counterattack 2...c6

Other Black second moves are rarely played. If Black tries to transpose into the **Hungarian Defense** with 2...Be7?, then 3.Qh5 wins a pawn.

The **Calabrian Countergambit** (2...f5?!) is named after Greco's homeland, **Calabria**. It is considered dubious, as the line recommended by **Carl Jaenisch**, 3.d3 Nf6 4.f4 d6 5.Nf3, gives White the advantage.

## Summary of other Black responses

- 2...c6 (Philidor Counterattack)
- 2...Nc6
- 2...d6
- 2...f5?! (Calabrian Countergambit)
  - 3.d3 (Jaenisch Variation)

## 5.1.3 References

### Notes

- [1] **Reuben, Stewart** (1992). *Chess Openings — Your Choice!*. Cadogan Chess. p. 59. ISBN 1-85744-070-6.
- [2] **Adams, Weaver** (1939). *White to Play and Win*. David McKay Company. pp. 9–12.
- [3] **Evans, Larry** (1970). *Chess Catechism*. Simon and Schuster. pp. 147, 153. ISBN 978-0-671-21531-6.
- [4] **de Firmian, Nick** (1999). *Modern Chess Openings*. David McKay Company. pp. 144–45. ISBN 0-8129-3084-3.
- [5] *Id.* at 143.
- [6] **Fischer, Bobby** (1972). *My 60 Memorable Games*. Faber and Faber. pp. 280–81. ISBN 0-571-09987-4.

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- **Lane, Gary** (2004). *The Bishop's Opening Explained*. Batsford. ISBN 0-7134-8917-0.
- **Weaver W. Adams**, *White to Play and Win*, ISBN 978-0-923891-83-1

## 5.1.4 External links

- **Goeller, Michael**. *The Bishop's Opening*.
- **Harding, Tim** (August 1998). *The Kibitzer: What Exactly is the Bishop's Opening?*. *ChessCafe.com*.
- **Harding, Tim** (September 1998). *The Kibitzer: The Eternal Appeal Of The Urusov Gambit*. *ChessCafe.com*.
- **Harding, Tim** (October 1998). *The Kibitzer: Is the Urusov Gambit Sound?*. *ChessCafe.com*.

## 5.2 Portuguese Opening

The **Portuguese Opening** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Bb5

The Portuguese is an uncommon opening. In contrast to the **Ruy Lopez** (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5), by delaying Nf3, White leaves the f-pawn free to move and retains the possibility of playing f2–f4. The trade-off is that White's lack of pressure on e5 leaves Black with a freer hand.

### 5.2.1 Lines

If Black replies 2...Nf6, White can try a gambit with 3.d4. Another Black reply is 2...Nc6, possibly anticipating White will transpose into the Ruy Lopez with 3.Nf3, but a more popular try is to kick White's bishop with 2...c6. The game might continue 3.Ba4 Nf6 and now White can play 4.Nc3 or 4.Qe2.

**Graham Burgess** remarks that it looks like a Ruy Lopez where White has forgotten to play 2.Nf3. However, the Portuguese is not as bad or nonsensical as it first appears, and Black should proceed carefully.

### 5.2.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 5.2.3 References

- **Burgess, Graham** (2000). *The Mammoth Book of Chess*. Carroll & Graf. ISBN 0-7867-0725-9.

## 5.2.4 External links

- [227 Games at Chess.com](#)

## 5.3 King's Gambit

The **King's Gambit** is a **chess opening** that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. f4

White offers a pawn to divert the Black e-pawn so as to build a strong centre with d2–d4. Theory has shown that in order for Black to maintain the **gambit pawn**, he may well be forced to weaken his **kingside**.

The King's Gambit is one of the oldest documented openings, as it was examined by the 17th-century **Italian** chess player **Giulio Cesare Polerio**.<sup>[1]</sup> It is also in an older book by **Luis Ramírez de Lucena**.<sup>[2]</sup>

The King's Gambit was one of the most popular openings in the 19th century, but is infrequently seen at **master** level today, as Black can obtain a reasonable position by returning the extra pawn to consolidate. There are two main branches, depending on whether or not Black plays 2...exf4: the King's Gambit Accepted (KGA) and the King's Gambit Declined (KGD).

### 5.3.1 History

The King's Gambit was one of the most popular openings for over 300 years, and has been played by many of the strongest players in many of the greatest **brilliances**, including the **Immortal Game**; nonetheless, players have held widely divergent views on it. **François-André Danican Philidor** (1726–95), the greatest player and **theorist** of his day, wrote that the King's Gambit should end in a draw with **best play** by both sides, stating that “a gambit equally well attacked and defended is never a decisive [game], either on one side or the other.”<sup>[3]</sup> Writing over 150 years later, **Siegbert Tarrasch**, one of the world's strongest players in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, pronounced the opening “a decisive mistake” and wrote that “it is almost madness to play the King's Gambit.”<sup>[4]</sup> Similarly, future **World Champion** **Bobby Fischer** wrote a famous article, “A Bust to the King's Gambit”, in which he stated, “In my opinion the King's Gambit is busted. It loses by force” and offered his **Fischer Defense** (3...d6) as a refutation.<sup>[5][6]</sup> FM **Graham Burgess**, in his book *The Mammoth Book of Chess*, noted the discrepancy between the King's Gambit and **Wilhelm**

**Steinitz's** accumulation theory. Steinitz had argued that an attack is only justified when a player has an advantage, and an advantage is only obtainable after the opponent makes a mistake. Since 1...e5 does not look like a blunder, White should not therefore be launching an attack.<sup>[7]</sup>

None of these pronouncements, however, proved to be actual refutations of the King's Gambit. In 2012, an April Fool prank by **Chessbase** in association with **Vasik Rajlich**—inventor of **Rybka**—claimed to have proven to a 99.99999999% certainty that the King's Gambit is at best a draw for white.<sup>[8][9]</sup> In a later post, owning up to the prank, “**The ChessBase April Fools revisited**”. *Rajlich estimated that, we're still probably a good 25 or so orders of magnitude away from being able to solve something like the King's Gambit. If processing power doubles every 18 months for the next century, we'll have the resources to do this around the year 2120, plus or minus a few decades*

Although the King's Gambit has been rare in modern **grandmaster** play, a handful of grandmasters have continued to use it, including **Joseph Gallagher**, **Hikaru Nakamura**, **Nigel Short**, and **Alexei Fedorov**. It was also part of the arsenal of **David Bronstein**, who almost singlehandedly brought the opening back to respectability in modern play, and after him, **Boris Spassky** beat strong players with it, including **Bobby Fischer**, **Zsuzsa Polgar**, and a famous brilliancy against Bronstein himself.

The King's Gambit is frequently seen in club play.

### 5.3.2 Variations

Both the accepted and declined gambit have several variations, though acceptance is generally considered best.

#### King's Gambit Accepted: 2...exf4

The King Knight's Gambit

- 3.Nf3 – the **King Knight's Gambit**
- 3.Bc4 – the **Bishop's Gambit**

As stated above, Black usually accepts with 2...exf4. White then has two main continuations: **3.Nf3**, the **King Knight's Gambit** is the most common as it develops the **knight** and prevents 3...Qh4+; and **3.Bc4**, the **Bishop's Gambit**, where White's development will rapidly increase after the continuation often played in the 19th century, 3...Qh4+!? 4.Kf1 followed by 5.Nf3, driving the queen away and gaining a tempo; however, 3...Nf6 is far more common in modern practice. There are also many other third moves; some of the most respected are:

- 3.Nc3 – the **Mason Gambit** or **Keres Gambit**
- 3.d4 – the **Villemson Gambit**<sup>[10]</sup> or **Steinitz Gambit**
- 3.Be2 – the **Lesser Bishop's Gambit** or **Tartakower Gambit**
- 3.Qf3 – the **Breyer Gambit** or **Hungarian Gambit**

Other moves have also been assigned names, but are rarely played.

### King Knight's Gambit: 3.Nf3

**Classical Variation: 3...g5** The Classical Variation arises after 3.Nf3 g5, when the main continuations traditionally have been 4.h4 (the **Paris Attack**), and 4.Bc4. However, recently also 4.Nc3 (the **Quaade Attack**)<sup>[11]</sup> has been played by strong players.

**4.h4** After 4.h4 g4 White can choose between 5.Ng5 or 5.Ne5. 5.Ng5 is the **Allgaier Gambit**,<sup>[12]</sup> intending 5...h6 6.Nxf7, but is considered dubious by modern theory. Stronger is 5.Ne5, the **Kieseritzky Gambit**, which is relatively positional in nature, popularized by **Lionel Kieseritzky** in the 1840s. It was used very successfully by **Wilhelm Steinitz**, and was used by **Boris Spassky** to beat **Bobby Fischer** in a famous game at **Mar del Plata 1960**. This motivated Fischer into developing his own defense to the King's Gambit – see “Fischer Defense” below.

**4.Bc4** The extremely sharp **Muzio Gambit**<sup>[13]</sup> arises after 4.Bc4 g4 5.0-0 gxf3 6.Qxf3, where White has gambited a knight but has three pieces bearing down on f7.<sup>[14]</sup> Such wild play is rare in modern chess, but Black must exercise care in consolidating his position. Black can avoid the Muzio by meeting 4.Bc4 with 4...Bg7 and ...h6. Perhaps the sharpest continuation is the **Double Muzio** after 6...Qf6 7.e5 Qxe5 8.Bxf7+!? leaving white two pieces down in eight moves, but with a position some masters consider having equal chances.<sup>[15][16]</sup>

Similar lines which may transpose into the Muzio are the **Ghulam Kassim Gambit**, 4.Bc4 g4 5.d4, and the **Mac-Donnell Gambit**, 4.Bc4 g4 5.Nc3. These are generally considered inferior to the Muzio, which has the advantage of reinforcing White's attack along the f-file.

The **Salvio Gambit**, 4.Bc4 g4 5.Ne5 Qh4+ 6.Kf1, is considered better for Black due to the insecurity of White's king. Black may play safely with 6...Nh6, or counter-sacrifice with 6...f3 or 6...Nc6.

A safe alternative to 4...g4 is 4...Bg7.

**Becker Defence: 3...h6** The **Becker Defence** (3.Nf3 h6), has the idea of creating a **pawn chain** on h6, g5, f4 to defend the f4 pawn while avoiding the **Kieseritzky Gambit**; Black will not be forced to play ...g4 when White plays to undermine the chain with h4. White has the option of 4.b3, though the main line continues with 4.d4 g5 (**ECO C37**) and will usually transpose to lines of the Classical Variation after 5.Bc4 Bg7 6.0-0 (**ECO C38**).

**Bonch–Osmolovsky Defence: 3...Ne7** The rarely seen **Bonch–Osmolovsky Defence**<sup>[17]</sup> (3.Nf3 Ne7) was played by **Mark Bluvstein** to defeat former world title finalist **Nigel Short** at **Montreal 2007**,<sup>[18]</sup> though it has never been highly regarded by theory.

**Cunningham Defence: 3...Be7** The **Cunningham Defence** (3.Nf3 Be7) is Black's most aggressive option; it can permanently prevent White from castling after 4.Bc4 Bh4+ 5.Kf1 (else the wild **Bertin Gambit**, or **Three Pawns' Gambit**, 5.g3 fxg3 6.0-0 gxh2+ 7.Kh1, played in the nineteenth century). In modern practice, it is more common for Black to simply play 4...Nf6 5.e5 Ng4, known as the **Modern Cunningham**.

Rook Sacrifice in the Schallopp Defense

**Schallop Defence: 3...Nf6** The **Schallop Defence** (3.Nf3 Nf6) – intending 4.e5 Nh5, holding onto the pawn – is considered somewhat inferior and is rarely played today. In one of the lines, White can usually obtain a crushing attack via a rook sacrifice, 4.e5 Nh5 5.d4 g5 6.h4 g4 7.Ng5 Ng3 8.Bc4! Nxh1 9.Bxf7+ Ke7 10.Nc3 (looking for immediate mate at d5, or later via queen at f6) and Black appears doomed.

**Modern Defence: 3...d5** The **Modern Defence**, or **Abbazia Defence**,<sup>[19]</sup> (3.Nf3 d5) has much the same idea as the Falkbeer Counter-Gambit, and can in fact be reached by transposition, e.g. 2.f4 d5 3.exd5 exf4. Black concentrates on gaining piece play and fighting for the **initiative** rather than keeping the extra pawn. It has been recommended by several publications as an easy way to equalize, although White keeps a slight advantage due to his extra central pawn and piece activity. If White captures (4.exd5) then Black may play 4...Nf6 or recapture with 4...Qxd5, at which point it becomes the **Scandinavian Variation** of KGA.

Fischer Defense after 6.Ng1

### Fischer Defense: 3...d6

Main article: [King's Gambit, Fischer Defense](#)

“The refutation of any gambit begins with accepting it. In my opinion the King's Gambit is busted. It loses by force.” – R. Fischer, “A Bust to the King's Gambit”

The **Fischer Defense** (3.Nf3 d6), although previously known, was advocated by **Bobby Fischer** after he was defeated by **Boris Spassky** in a **Kieseritzky Gambit** at the 1960 **Mar del Plata** tournament. Fischer then decided to refute the King's Gambit, and the next year the *American Chess Quarterly* published Fischer's analysis of 3...d6, which he called “a high-class waiting move”.<sup>[5][6]</sup>

The point is that after 4.d4 g5 5.h4 g4 White cannot continue with 6.Ne5, as in the **Kieseritzky Gambit**, and 6.Ng5 is unsound because of 6...f6! trapping the knight. This leaves the move 6.Ng1 as the only option, when after six moves neither side has developed a piece.

The main alternative to 4.d4 is 4.Bc4, but it is considered inferior.

**3...Nc6** **Joe Gallagher** writes that 3.Nf3 Nc6 “has never really caught on, probably because it does nothing to address Black's immediate problems.” Like Fischer's Defense, it is a waiting move.<sup>[20]</sup> An obvious drawback is that the Nc6 may prove a target for the d-pawn later in the opening.

### King's Gambit Declined

Black can decline the offered pawn, or offer a **countergambit**.

### Falkbeer Countergambit: 2...d5

Main article: [King's Gambit, Falkbeer Countergambit](#)

The **Falkbeer Countergambit** is named after 19th-century German-speaking **Austro-Hungarian** **Ernst Falkbeer**. It runs 1.e4 e5 2.f4 d5 3.exd5 e4, in which Black sacrifices a pawn in return for quick and easy development. It was once considered good for Black and scored well, but White obtains some advantage with the response 4.d3!, and the line fell out of favour after the 1930s.

A more modern interpretation of the Falkbeer is 2...d5 3.exd5 c6!?, as advocated by **Aron Nimzowitsch**. Black is not concerned about pawns and aims for early piece activity. White has a better pawn structure and prospects of a better endgame. The main line continues 4.Nc3 exf4 5.Nf3 Bd6 6.d4 Ne7 7.dxc6 Nbx6, giving positions analogous to the Modern Variation of the gambit accepted.

**Classical Defence: 2...Bc5** A common way to decline the gambit is with 2...Bc5, the “classical” KGD. The bishop prevents White from **castling** and is such a nuisance that White often expends two **tempi** to eliminate it by means of Nc3–a4, to exchange on c5 or b6, whereupon he may castle without worry. It also contains an opening trap for novices: if White continues with 3.fxe5?? Black continues 3...Qh4+, in which either the **rook** is lost (4.g3 Qxe4+, **forking** the rook and **king**) or White is **checkmated** (4.Ke2 Qxe4#). This line often comes about by **transposition** from lines of the **Vienna Game** or **Bishop's Opening**, when White plays f2–f4 before Nf3.

**Other 2nd moves** Other options in the KGD are possible, though unusual, such as the **Adelaide Countergambit** 2...Nc6 3.Nf3 f5, advocated by **Tony Miles**; 2...d6, when after 3.Nf3, best is 3...exf4 transposing to the **Fischer Defense** (though 2...d6 invites White to play 3.d4 instead); and 2...Nf6 3.fxe5 Nxe4 4.Nf3 Ng5! 5.d4 Nxf3+ 6.Qxf3 Qh4+ 7.Qf2 Qxf2+ 8.Kxf2 with a small endgame advantage, as played in the 1968 game between **Bobby Fischer** and **Robert Wade** in **Vinkovci**.<sup>[21]</sup> The greedy 2...Qf6 (known as the **Norwalde Variation**), intending 3...Qxf4, is considered dubious. Also dubious are the **Keene Defense**: 2...Qh4+ 3.g3 Qe7 and the **Mafia Defense**: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 c5.<sup>[22]</sup>

**Pantelidakis Countergambit: 2...f5** Among the oldest countergambits in KGD, currently known as the **Pantelidakis Countergambit**, is the variation 1.e4 e5 2.f4 f5?!, known from a game played in 1625 which **Gioachino Greco** won with the Black pieces.<sup>[23]</sup> **Vincenz Hruby** also played it against **Mikhail Chigorin** in 1882.<sup>[24]</sup> It is nonetheless considered dubious because 3.exf5 with the threat of Qh5+ gives White a good game. The variation is so-named because **Grandmaster Larry Evans** answered a question from **Peter Pantelidakis** of Chicago about it in one of his columns in *Chess Life and Review*.

## 5.3.3 ECO

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) has ten codes for the King's Gambit, C30 through C39.

- C30: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 (King's Gambit)
- C31: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 d5 (Falkbeer Countergambit)
- C32: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 d5 3.exd5 e4 4.d3 Nf6 (Morphy, Charousek, etc.)
- C33: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 (King's Gambit Accepted)
- C34: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 (King's Knight's Gam-

- C35: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 Be7 (Cunningham Defense)
- C36: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 d5 (Abbazia Defense)
- C37: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 g5 4.Nc3 /4.Bc4 g4 5.0-0 (Muzio Gambit)
- C38: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 g5 4.Bc4 Bg7 (Philidor, Hanstein, etc.)
- C39: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 g5 4.h4 (Allgaier, Kieseritzky, etc.)

### 5.3.4 References

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- [3] Philidor, François-André Danican (2005), *Analysis of the Game of Chess (1777)* (2nd ed.), Harding Simple Ltd., p. 67, ISBN 1-84382-161-3
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- [5] Bobby Fischer, “A Bust to the King’s Gambit”, *American Chess Quarterly*, Summer 1961, pp. 3–9.
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- [7] Burgess, Graham (2010), *The Mammoth Book of Chess*, Running Press
- [8] “Rajlich: Busting the King’s Gambit, this time for sure”.
- [9] “The ChessBase April Fools revisited”.
- [10] Named after Martin Villemson (1897-1933) of Pärnu, Estonia, editor of the chess magazine *Eesti Maleilm*. See *Oxford Companion to Chess*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, 1984
- [11] For the origin of the term “Quaade Attack” or “Quaade Gambit” see “A Chess Gamelet” by Edward Winter, 2014
- [12] Kasparov, Gary; Keene, Raymond (1982). *Batsford Chess Openings*. American Chess Promotions. pp. 288–89. ISBN 0-7134-2112-6.
- [13] For the origins of the name “Muzio” and how the eponymous variation came to be labeled, see Polerio Gambit
- [14] Nakamura vs. Andreikin
- [15] Peter Millican 1989
- [16] Shirov vs. J Lapinski

- [17] Named after Soviet national master Mikhail Aleksandrovich Bonch-Osmolovsky (1919-1975), also chess theorist and arbiter. See Mikhail Aleksandrovich Bonch-Osmolovsky at ChessGames.com

- [18] Short vs. Bluvshstein

- [19] The name comes from a tournament, played in Abbazia in 1912, in which all the games had to be a King’s Gambit Accepted. The town, at the time in the Austria-Hungary empire, is now in modern Croatia

- [20] Joe Gallagher, *Winning with the King’s Gambit*, Henry Holt, 1993, p. 105. ISBN 0-8050-2631-2.

- [21] Fischer vs. Wade

- [22] King’s Gambit: Declined, Mafia Defense, ChessGames.com

- [23] anonymous vs. Greco, ChessGames.com

- [24] Chigorin vs. Hruby, Vienna 1882, 365chess.com

### 5.3.5 Further reading

- Korchnoi, Victor; Zak, V. G. (1974). *King’s Gambit*. Batsford. ISBN 9780713429145.
- Estrin, Yakov; Glazkov, I. B. (1982). *Play the King’s Gambit*. ISBN 978-0080268736.
- Schiller, Eric (1989). *Who’s Afraid of the King’s Gambit Accepted?*. Thinkers Pr Inc / Chessco. ISBN 978-0931462900.
- Gallagher, Joe (1993). *Winning With the King’s Gambit*. Henry Holt. ISBN 978-0805026313.
- Johansson, Thomas; Wallin, Maria (Illustrator) (2005). *The Fascinating King’s Gambit*. Trafford on Demand. ISBN 9781412046473. Cite uses deprecated parameter lcoauthors= (help)

### 5.3.6 External links

- The Bishop’s Gambit
- Not quite winning with the Allgaier Gambit
- The Double Muzio
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 (26248 games)

## 5.4 Fischer Defense

The **Fischer Defense** to the **King's Gambit** is a chess opening variation that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. f4 exf4
3. Nf3 d6

Although 3...d6 was previously known,<sup>[1]</sup> it did not become a major variation until Fischer advocated it in a famous 1961 article in the first issue of the *American Chess Quarterly*.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

In the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, the Fischer Defense is given the code C34.

### 5.4.1 History

After Bobby Fischer lost a 1960 game<sup>[4]</sup> at Mar del Plata to Boris Spassky, in which Spassky played the **Kieseritzky Gambit**, Fischer left in tears<sup>[5]</sup> and promptly went to work at devising a new defense to the King's Gambit. In Fischer's 1961 article, "A **Bust** to the King's Gambit", he claimed, "In my opinion the King's Gambit is busted. It loses by force."<sup>[6]</sup> Fischer concluded the article with the famous line, "Of course White can always play differently, in which case he merely loses differently. (Thank you, **Weaver Adams!**)"<sup>[7]</sup> The article became famous.<sup>[8][9]</sup>

Remarkably, Fischer later played the King's Gambit himself with great success,<sup>[10]</sup> including winning all three tournament games in which he played it.<sup>[11][12][13]</sup> However, he played the Bishop's Gambit (1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Bc4) rather than the King's Knight Gambit (3.Nf3), the only line that he analyzed in his article.

### 5.4.2 Ideas behind the opening

Fischer called 3...d6 "a high-class waiting move".<sup>[14]</sup> It allows Black to hold the gambit pawn with ...g5 (unless White plays the immediate 4.h4) while avoiding the **Kieseritzky Gambit** (1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 g5 4.h4 g4 5.Ne5). Fischer asserted that 3...g5 "is inexact because it gives White drawing chances" after 4.h4 g4 5.Ne5 Nf6 6.d4 d6 7.Nd3 Nxe4 8.Bxf4 Bg7 9.c3! (improving on Spassky's 9.Nc3) Qe7 10.Qe2 Bf5 11.Nd2, which, according to Fischer, "leads to an ending where Black's extra pawn is neutralized by White's stranglehold on the dark squares, especially [f4]".<sup>[14]</sup>

After 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 d6 the most common response is 4.d4.<sup>[15]</sup> If White now tries to force transpositions

to Becker Defense (3...h6) or Classical Defense (3...g5) positions, then White can end up in difficulties. Fischer analyzed 4.d4 g5 5.h4 g4 6.Ng5 f6 7.Nh3 gxh3 8.Qh5+ Kd7 9.Bxf4 Qe8! 10.Qf3 Kd8 "and with King and Queen reversed, Black wins easily".<sup>[14]</sup>

Another popular move is 4.Bc4. Fischer recommended 4...h6 in response, which he dubbed the "Berlin Defence Deferred".<sup>[14]</sup> Black's third and fourth moves stop the white knight on f3 from moving to the two dangerous squares e5 and g5.

A quite recent idea is 4.d4 g5 5.Nc3. White intends to leave the bishop on f1 for a while, play an improved version of the **Hanstein Gambit** (3...g5 4.Bc4 Bg7 and later g2–g3), and, after forcing Black's f-pawn to move, develop the queenside with Be3, Qd2, and 0-0-0.<sup>[16]</sup>

### 5.4.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 5.4.4 References

- [1] For example, George H. D. Gossip and S. Lipschütz noted that 3...d6 was "a move advised by Stamma, and which Mr. Löwenthal thinks may be safely adopted", and that "the game is even" after 4.Bc4 or 4.d4. G. H. D. Gossip and S. Lipschütz, *The Chess-Player's Manual* (3rd ed. 1902), David McKay, p. 491. OCLC 3727518.
- [2] Bobby Fischer, "A Bust to the King's Gambit", *American Chess Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Summer 1961), pp. 3–9.
- [3] **A Bust to the King's Gambit**. ChessCafe.com. Retrieved on 2009-11-16.
- [4] **Boris Spassky vs Robert James Fischer (1960)**
- [5] Carl Schreck; Moscow Patzer: A Bread Run With the Great Bronstein {[http://carlschreck.com/displayArticle.php?article\\_id=91](http://carlschreck.com/displayArticle.php?article_id=91), which cites: <http://rsport.netorn.ru/ech/khariton/bron2.htm>
- [6] Fischer, p. 4.
- [7] Fischer, p. 9. Fischer was alluding to a statement by Adams, author of the controversial book *White to Play and Win*, who famously claimed that White won by force with best play, and that if Black played differently from the lines given by Adams, he "merely loses differently".
- [8] **Nick de Firmian** refers to "A Bust to the King's Gambit" as "Bobby Fischer's famous article". Nick de Firmian, *Modern Chess Openings (15th edition)*, McKay Chess Library, 2008, p. 3. ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7.

- [9] Andrew Soltis calls it “a celebrated article”. Andrew Soltis, in Karsten Müller, *Bobby Fischer: The Career and Complete Games of the American World Chess Champion*, Russell Enterprises, Inc., 2009, p. 29. ISBN 978-1-888690-68-2.
- [10]
- [11] Fischer–Evans, 1963–64 U.S. Championship. Chess-Games.com. Retrieved on 2009-02-16.
- [12] Fischer–Minic, Vinkovci 1968. ChessGames.com. Retrieved on 2009-02-16.
- [13] Fischer–Wade, Vinkovci 1968. ChessGames.com. Retrieved on 2009-02-16.
- [14] Fischer, p. 5.
- [15]
- [16] <http://www.chesspub.com/cgi-bin/yabb2/YaBB.pl?num=1144000928/15>

## 5.5 Falkbeer Countergambit

The **Falkbeer Countergambit** is a chess opening that begins:

1. e4 e5
2. f4 d5

In this aggressive countergambit, Black disdains the pawn offered as a sacrifice, instead opening the centre to exploit White's weakness on the kingside. After the standard capture, 3.exd5, Black may reply with 3...exf4, transposing into the **King's Gambit Accepted**, 3...e4, or the more modern 3...c6.

A well known blunder in this opening is White's reply 3.fxe5?!, which after 3...Qh4+, either loses material after 4.g3 Qxe4+, forking the king and rook, or severely exposes the white king to the black pieces after 4.Ke2 Qxe4+ 5.Kf2 Bc5+.

The opening bears the name of Austrian master Ernst Falkbeer, who played it in an 1851 game against Adolf Anderssen.<sup>[1]</sup> The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) codes for the Falkbeer Countergambit are C31 and C32.

### 5.5.1 Old Main line: 3...e4

In this variation, Black's compensation for the sacrificed pawn primarily consists of his lead in development, coupled with the exposure of White's king. A typical line may run: 4.d3 Nf6 5.dxe4 Nxe4 6.Nf3 Bc5, where Black aims for the weakness on f2. In Maehrisch-Ostrau 1923, a game

between Rudolf Spielmann and Siegbert Tarrasch continued: 7.Qe2 Bf5 (this was condemned by the *Handbuch des Schachspiels* because of White's next, though Black had already got into difficulties in the game Réti–Breyer, Budapest 1917, where 7...f5 8.Nfd2 Bf2+ 9.Kd1 Qxd5 10.Nc3 was played) 8.g4?! (in retrospect, prudent was 8.Nc3) 8...0-0! 9.gxf5 Re8 and Black has a tremendous position, as he is bound to regain material and White's positional deficiencies will remain.<sup>[2]</sup>

This line fell out of favour after World War II, as Black encountered difficulties, with players eventually turning to the next idea.

### 5.5.2 Nimzowitsch Counter Gambit: 3...c6

This has become the most commonly played move after 3.exd5, with its most notable advocate being John Nunn. It is usually attributed to Aron Nimzowitsch, who successfully played it in Spielmann–Nimzowitsch, Munich 1906.<sup>[3]</sup> However, Frank Marshall actually introduced the move to master play at Ostend 1905, defeating Richard Teichmann in 34 moves.<sup>[4][5]</sup> Annotating that game in his 1914 book *Marshall's Chess "Swindles"*, Marshall described his 3...c6 as, “An innovation.”<sup>[6]</sup>

Although Black won both of those games, 3...c6 languished in obscurity for many years thereafter. White can respond with 4.Qe2, despite the drastic defeat inflicted on the young Alexander Alekhine by Paul Johner at Carlsbad 1911, although 4.Nc3 exf4 is much more common. The resulting positions are analogous to the **Modern Defence of the King's Gambit Accepted**, in which White strives to utilise his 4–2 queenside pawn majority, with Black relying on his piece activity and cramping pawn at f4 to play against White's king. Theory has not reached a definitive verdict, but the resulting positions are believed to offer Black more chances than 3...e4.

### 5.5.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 5.5.4 References

- [1] Adolf Anderssen vs Ernst Falkbeer, Berlin 1851.
- [2] Rudolf Spielmann vs Siegbert Tarrasch, Maehrisch-Ostrau 1923.
- [3] Rudolf Spielmann vs Aron Nimzowitsch, Munich 1906.
- [4] Edward Winter, *Chess Note* 6792 (published 2010/10/17).

[5] Richard Teichmann vs Frank James Marshall, 1905.

[6] *Marshall's Chess "Swindles"*, *American Chess Bulletin*, 1914, p. 119.

### 5.5.5 External links

- Falkbeer Countergambit video and analysis
- Takchess Chess Improvement – The Spirit of the Falkbeer Countergambit KGD
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 d5 (4297 games)
- Edward Winter, Falkbeer Counter-Gambit (published 2010/10/17). List of pre-World War II magazine references to the Falkbeer.

## 5.6 Rice Gambit

The **Rice Gambit** is a chess opening that arises from the King's Gambit Accepted. An offshoot of the Kieseritzky Gambit, it is characterized by the moves **1. e4 e5 2. f4 exf4 3. Nf3 g5 4. h4 g4 5. Ne5 Nf6 6. Bc4 d5 7. exd5 Bd6 8. 0-0** (instead of the normal 8.d4). White offers the sacrifice of the knight on e5 in order to get his king to safety and prepare a rook to join the attack against Black's underdeveloped position.

### 5.6.1 History

The Rice Gambit was heavily promoted by wealthy German-born, American businessman Isaac Rice towards the end of the 19th century. He sponsored numerous theme tournaments where the diagram position became the starting point of every game played. Such giants of the chess world as Emanuel Lasker, Mikhail Chigorin, Carl Schlechter, Frank Marshall, and David Janowski were among the participants.<sup>[1]</sup> These events stretched from Monte Carlo, Saint Petersburg, and Ostend, to Brooklyn and Trenton Falls.<sup>[1]</sup> In a 1905 Pillsbury National Correspondence Chess Association event, 230 amateurs played the gambit by mail.<sup>[1]</sup> So obsessed was Rice with his pet line, he formed The **Rice Gambit Association** in 1904, at his home in New York.<sup>[2]</sup> With Dr. Lasker as Secretary, the Association even published a book of all the games played in the theme tournaments.<sup>[2]</sup>

Concrete analysis has long since shown the gambit to be “neither good nor necessary”, so it has been abandoned in serious play and stands only as “a grotesque monument to a rich man's vanity”.<sup>[3]</sup> The *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* (1997) analyzes 8...Bxe5 9.Re1 Qe7 10.c3 Nh5

11.d4 Nd7 12.dxe5 Nxe5 13.b3 0-0 14.Ba3 Nf3+ 15.gxf3 Qxh4 16.Re5 Bf5 (or 16...Qg3=) 17.Nd2 Qg3+ 18.Kf1 Qh2 19.Bxf8 g3 20.Bc5 g2+ 21.Ke1 Qh4+ (or 21...g1=Q 22.Bxg1 Qxg1+ 23.Bf1 Ng3 with an unclear position) 22.Ke2 Ng3+ 23.Kf2 Ne4+ with a draw by perpetual check, attributing this analysis to José Raúl Capablanca, Amos Burn, and Edward Lasker.<sup>[4]</sup>

However, modern engine analysis has shown that 16...Ng3 is considered stronger than 16...Bf5. Then 17.Nd2 f6 18.d6+ Kh8 19.dxc7 Qh1+ 20. Kf2 Qh2+ 21. Ke1 Qh4 22. Bxf8 Ne4+ 23. Ke2 Qf2+ 24. Kd3 Qe3+ 25. Kc2 Qxc3+ 26.Kb1 Nxd2+.

### 5.6.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 5.6.3 References

- [1] Soltis 1978, p. 165.
- [2] Sunnucks 1970, p. 404.
- [3] Hooper & Whyld 1996, *Rice Gambit*, p. 340.
- [4] Matanović 1997 (Vol C), p. 209, n. 28.

### Bibliography

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion To Chess*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0192800493.
- Matanović, Aleksandar, ed. (1997). *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings C* (3rd ed.). Yugoslavia: Chess Informant. ISBN 86-7297-035-7.
- Soltis, Andy (1978). *Chess to Enjoy*. Stein and Day. ISBN 0-8128-6059-4.
- Sunnucks, Anne (1970). *The Encyclopaedia of Chess*. Hale. ISBN 0709110308.

### 5.6.4 External links

- Edward Winter, Professor Isaac Rice and the Rice Gambit (2006)
- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 g5 4.h4 g4 5.Ne5 Nf6 6.Bc4 d5 7.exd5 Bd6 8.0-0 (178 games)

## 5.7 Center Game

The **Center Game** is a **chess opening** that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. d4 exd4

The game usually continues 3.Qxd4 Nc6, developing with a gain of **tempo** due to the attack on the white **queen**. (Note that 3.c3 is considered a separate opening: the **Danish Gambit**.)

The Center Game is an old opening. It was mostly abandoned by 1900 because no advantage could be demonstrated for **White**. Jacques Mieses, Ksawery Tartakower and Rudolf Spielmann seemed to be the last strong players who would adopt it. The Center Game was rarely played by elite players until Shabalov revived it in the 1980s. Later, Alexei Shirov, Michael Adams, Judit Polgár and Alexander Morozevich also contributed to the theory of the Center Game by forcing revaluation of lines long thought to favor Black. In recent years, the young player Ian Nepomniachtchi has also experimented with it.

White succeeds in eliminating Black's e-pawn and opening the d-file, but at the cost of moving the queen early and allowing Black to develop with **tempo** with 3...Nc6. In White's favor, after 4.Qe3, the most commonly played retreat, the position of the white queen hinders Black's ability to play ...d5. The **back rank** is cleared of pieces quickly which facilitates **queenside castling** and may allow White to quickly develop an attack. From e3, the white queen may later move to g3 where she will pressure Black's g7-square.

### 5.7.1 Variations

#### 3.c3

Main article: **Danish Gambit**

#### 3.Qxd4 Nc6

The nearly universal sequence of moves in the Center Game is 3.Qxd4 Nc6 (ECO code C22). Now White has a choice of retreat squares for the queen. Although 4.Qa4 corresponds to a fairly commonly played variation of the **Scandinavian Defense** (1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qa5), it is rarely played in the Center Game because tournament experience has not been favorable for White in this line.

The best move for the queen seems to be 4.Qe3, known as Paulsen's Attack. White intends to castle Queen's side in

this line. Black usually continues 4...Nf6 when a typical line continues 5.Nc3 Bb4 6.Bd2 0-0 7.0-0 Re8. White may try to complicate play by means of the pawn sacrifice 8.Qg3!? intending 8...Rxe4 9.a3! - **Shabalov's** move. Black's best reply seems to be the quiet 9...Ba5. Even though this line gives White some compensation for the pawn, it is probably fine for Black.<sup>[1]</sup>

A more solid option for Black is the natural 5...Be7! intending d7-d5 (sometimes even after White plays 6.Bc4), opening up lines as soon as possible. Black also seems to get a good game with 4...g6, and 4...Bb4+ has been played successfully as well.

#### 3.Nf3 or 3.Bc4

Postponing recapture of the queen pawn is a standard idea in the **Scandinavian Defense** (1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6), but 3.Nf3 is less commonly played in the Center Game. Black can safely transpose to the **Scotch Game**, **Petrov's Defense** or the **Philidor Defense**, or play a line recommended by **Alekhine**, 3...Bc5 4.Nxd4 Nf6 and now 5.e5 would be met with 5...Qe7. Similar ideas are possible after 3.Bc4, which is also uncommon.

#### 3.f4?! (Halasz Gambit)

The Halasz Gambit (3.f4?!) is another rare try. Although the move dates back to at least 1840, it has been championed more recently by the **Hungarian correspondence chess** player Dr György Halasz. The gambit seems dubious but it has not been definitely refuted.

### 5.7.2 References

- [1] Arne Moll, *Finding Nepo (on an old laptop)* (2009) at ChessVibes.com

### 5.7.3 External links

- Harding, Tim (August 1999). "The Vampire Gambit: Can We Bury It Now?". *ChessCafe.com*, The Kibitzer.
- Harding, Tim (December 2004). "The Center Game takes Center Stage" (pdf). *ChessCafe.com*, The Kibitzer.

## 5.8 Danish Gambit

The **Danish Gambit**, known as the *Nordisches Gambit* (Nordic Gambit) in German, and the *Noors Gambiet* (Nor-

wegian Gambit) in Dutch, is a chess opening that begins with the moves:<sup>[1]</sup>

1. e4 e5
2. d4 exd4
3. c3

White will sacrifice one or two pawns for the sake of rapid development and the attack. However, with care, Black can accept one or both pawns safely, or simply decline the gambit altogether with good chances.

Although it may have been known earlier, Danish player **Martin Severin From** essayed the gambit in the **Paris 1867** tournament and he is usually given credit for the opening. The Danish Gambit was popular with masters of the attack including **Alekhine**, **Marshall**, **Blackburne**, and **Mieses**, but as more defensive lines for Black were discovered and improved, it lost favor in the 1920s. Today it is rarely played in top-level chess.

### 5.8.1 History

From the very beginning the nomenclature of the Danish Gambit was very confusing. The idea stems from a famous correspondence game London–Edinburgh, 1824: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4 Bc5 5.c3 Qe7 6.0-0 dxc3 7.Nxc3. The Swede **Hans Lindehn** played 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 on a regular basis from 1857 at the latest. He defeated the later World Champion **Wilhelm Steinitz** with his gambit in London, 1864. It is possible, that Severin From met Lindehn in Paris in this period and learned about the gambit there. According to Graham Burgess, in **Denmark** itself, the opening is called the Nordic Gambit.<sup>[2]</sup>

Many games transposed to the **Göring Gambit**, as Nf3 for White and Nc6 for Black are logical moves. As Carl Theodor Göring also used to play the double gambit, there was hardly any difference.

Remarkably enough, the idea to sacrifice just one pawn (Nxc3) is older in the **Göring Gambit** than in the Danish. **Paul Morphy** encountered it at the first USA-Congress of 1857 against **Alexander Meek**. In the Danish, especially **Alexander Alekhine** applied 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 dxc3 4.Nxc3, but on unimportant occasions.

### 5.8.2 Main lines

The Danish Gambit is a variation of the **Center Game** that is important enough to be treated on its own. It is C21 in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* classification.

After 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3, Black can safely decline the gambit with 3...d6, 3...Qe7, or 3...d5 (**Sörensen Defense** or **Capablanca Defence**). If Black enters the Danish Gambit Accepted with 3...dxc3, the main possibilities are 4.Nxc3 and 4.Bc4.

#### Alekhine Variation: 4.Nxc3

- 4...d6 5.Bc4 Nc6 6.Nf3 (**Göring Gambit**, by transposition)
- 4...Bc5 5.Bc4 Nc6 6.Nf3 (**Göring Gambit**, by transposition)
- 4...Nc6 5.Bc4 and 6.Nf3 (**Göring Gambit**, by transposition)
- 4...Bb4 5.Bc4 (5.Qd4 is an independent option) Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 d6 7.Qb3 Qe7 8.Ne2 **Alekhine–Pomar**, clock simul Madrid 1943

**Alekhine** recommended that White play 4.Nxc3. This line often transposes into the **Göring Gambit** of the **Scotch Game**. There are only few lines with Black omitting Nc6 and/or White omitting Nf3. This move order enables White to avoid the critical main line of the **Göring Gambit** (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.c3 dxc3 5.Nxc3 Bb4) by keeping open the option of meeting an early ...Bb4 by developing the king's knight to e2 rather than f3 and thus preventing Black from disrupting White's queenside pawn structure, as **Alekhine** did in his game against **Pomar** above.

#### Lindehn's continuation: 4.Bc4

Danish Gambit Accepted

1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 dxc3 4.Bc4 cxb2 5.Bxb2

- 4...d6 5.Nxc3 (also **Göring Gambit**, by transposition)
- 4...cxb2 5.Bxb2 (**Danish Gambit Accepted**, see diagram)
  - 5...Bb4+ 6.Kf1 or 6.Nc3
  - 5...d6 6.Qb3
  - 5...d5 (**Schlechter Defense**)

White can instead offer a second pawn with 4.Bc4. The second pawn can be safely declined by transposing into the **Göring Gambit**. Accepting the pawn allows White's two bishops to rake the Black **kingside** after 4...cxb2 5.Bxb2. White will often follow up with Qb3 if possible, applying pressure on Black's b7- and f7-squares. Combined with

White's long diagonal pressure on g7, this can make it difficult for Black to develop his bishops. A similar position arises except for Black in the **Ross Gambit**,<sup>[3]</sup> a variation of the **Scandinavian Defence**.

Schlechter recommended one of the most reliable defenses for Black: by returning one of the pawns with 5...d5 Black gains time to complete development. After 6.Bxd5 Nf6 (Bb4+ is also possible) 7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Qxd8 Bb4+ 9.Qd2 Bxd2+ 10.Nxd2 c5, Black regains the queen. Most theorists evaluate this position as equal, but some believe that the queenside majority gives Black the advantage in the endgame. The popularity of the Danish plummeted after Schlechter's defense was introduced as the resulting positions are not what White generally desires from a gambit opening. There have been attempts, especially by German correspondence player Ingo Firnhaber, to revive the gambit idea with 7.Nc3, but according to Karsten Müller and Martin Voigt in *Danish Dynamite*, this line gives insufficient compensation after 7...Nxd5 8.Nxd5 Nbd7 (8...c6?? 9.Nf6+) 9.Nf3 c6, since the piece sacrifice 10.0-0 is dubious on account of 10...cxd5 11.exd5 Be7! If White instead plays 6.exd5, his light-square bishop is blocked and after 6...Nf6 7.Nc3 Bd6 Black can complete development relatively easily.

The big advantage of Göring's move order (Nf3 first, before c3) is avoiding Schlechter's defence, since after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.c3 dxc3 5.Bc4 cxb2 6.Bxb2 Black cannot safely play 6...d5 with the queen's knight committed to c6. The big advantage of 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 is the option to meet 3...d5 with 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.cxd4 Nc6 6.Be3 instead of 6.Nf3 transposing to the Göring Gambit Declined (the main objection being the Capablanca Variation, 6.Nf3 Bg4 7.Be2 Bb4+ 8.Nc3 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 Qc4, when White must exchange queens or give up castling rights). It also has the advantage of avoiding Black's other options after 2.Nf3, which is mainly the **Petrov Defence** 2...Nf6.

### 5.8.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 5.8.4 Notes

- [1] Edward G. Winter (1999). *Kings, Commoners and Knaves: Further Chess Explorations*. Russell Enterprises. p. 158. ISBN 978-1-888690-04-0.
- [2] Graham Burgess, *The Mammoth Book of Chess*, Carroll & Graf, 1997, p. 114. ISBN 0-7867-0725-9.
- [3] <http://faithsaves.net/scandinavian-marshall-ross-gambit/>

### 5.8.5 References

- Lutes, W. John (1992). *Danish Gambit*. Chess Enterprises. ISBN 0-945470-19-3.
- de Firmian, Nick (1999). *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-14*. Random House. ISBN 0-8129-3084-3.

### 5.8.6 External links

- Opening Report: 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 (2086 games)

## 5.9 Lopez Opening

Not to be confused with **Ruy Lopez**.

The **Lopez Opening** (or **MacLeod Attack**) is a chess opening characterized by the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. c3

The opening was played frequently by 19th century Scottish–Canadian chess master **Nicholas MacLeod** but has otherwise arisen rarely in tournament play.

### 5.9.1 Discussion

White's second move prepares to push a pawn to d4, establishing a strong center. Play can potentially transpose to other openings, most likely the **Ponziani Opening** or the **Göring Gambit** in the **Scotch Game**. However, Eric Schiller states in *Unorthodox Chess Openings* that the opening is too slow; that Black can respond vigorously with 2...d5! to eliminate transpositional possibilities and solve all of his opening problems, as after 1.e4 e5 2.c3 d5! 3.exd5 Qxd5, 4.Nc3 is not available to chase the queen away and gain a tempo.

### 5.9.2 See also

- **Ruy Lopez**—a very popular opening with a similar name

### 5.9.3 References

Schiller, Eric (2003). *Unorthodox Chess Openings*. Caradoza. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.

## 5.10 Napoleon Opening

The **Napoleon Opening** is an irregular **chess opening** starting with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Qf3

As with the similar **Wayward Queen Attack** (2.Qh5), White hopes for the **Scholar's Mate** (2.Qf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5?? 4.Qxf7#), but Black can easily avoid the trap.

### 5.10.1 History

The Napoleon Opening is named after the **French** general and emperor **Napoleon Bonaparte**, who had a deep love of chess but was said to be a mediocre player.<sup>[1]</sup> The name came into use after mid-nineteenth century publications reported<sup>[2]</sup> that he played this opening in an 1809 game which he lost to **The Turk**, a chess automaton operated at the time by **Johann Allgaier**.<sup>[3]</sup> The name may also be a slighting reference to Napoleon's empress, **Josephine** and her scandalous infidelities,<sup>[4]</sup> hence Napoleon's inability to keep his Queen at home.

### 5.10.2 Assessment

The Napoleon is a weak opening because it develops the white **queen** prematurely and subjects it to attack, and deprives the white **kingside knight** of its best development square. By comparison, the **Wayward Queen Attack** is more forcing and stronger—2.Qh5 requiring Black to first defend his e-pawn (usually with 2...Nc6), and then after 3.Bc4 forcing Black to play a sub-optimal move (3...g6 virtually committing Black to a **fianchetto** rather than a more aggressive placement of the **bishop**; 3...Qe7 blocking the bishop; or 3...Qf6 taking away the knight's best square). 2.Qf3 places no such impediments on Black's development.

### 5.10.3 See also

- [List of chess openings](#)
- [List of chess openings named after people](#)

### 5.10.4 References

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- [2] Winter, Edward (1998 with updates). "Napoleon Bonaparte and Chess by Edward Winter". Retrieved 18 January 2013. Check date values in: |date= (help)

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- [4] Napoleon Himself, 2005, John Schneider

### 5.10.5 External links

- [Napoleon vs. The Turk, Schönbrunn Palace, 1809](#)

## 5.11 Parham Attack

The **Danvers Opening**,<sup>[1]</sup> also known as the **Kentucky Opening**,<sup>[2]</sup> **Queen's Attack**,<sup>[3]</sup> **Queen's Excursion**,<sup>[4]</sup> **Wayward Queen Attack**,<sup>[5]</sup> **Patzer Opening**<sup>[6]</sup> or **Parham Attack**<sup>[7]</sup> is an unorthodox chess opening characterized by the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Qh5

### 5.11.1 History and nomenclature

1.e4 e5 2.Qh5 has rarely been described in chess literature, and is very rarely played by strong players. Because of this, it has acquired several names over the years, none of which are universally used. The earliest known appearance in print was in the *Dubuque Chess Journal* in May 1875, where it was dubbed the **Kentucky Opening**,<sup>[2]</sup> perhaps in reference to a game played in **Danville, Kentucky** which was published in the August issue of the same magazine.<sup>[8]</sup> (This name was also applied by **J. H. Blackburne** to the unsound **Jerome Gambit**.) In the *American Chess Bulletin* in 1905, the opening was referred to as the **Danvers Opening**, so named by **E. E. Southard** after the **psychiatric hospital** where he worked.<sup>[1]</sup>

Bernard Parham of **Indianapolis** is the first master-level player known to have advocated this line. Parham is known for his eccentric theories on the game of chess, which he has developed into what he calls the "Matrix System". Parham's Matrix System advocates early development of the queen in several positions, as in his favored line as White against the **Sicilian Defence**, 1.e4 c5 2.Qh5?! Parham argues that just as **Richard Réti** and **Aron Nimzowitsch** pioneered the **hypermodern** style of chess, his own ideas which are considered strange today may well be considered viable in the future. Several internet-based sources refer to 1.e4 e5 2.Qh5 as the **Parham Attack** or **Parham Opening**.<sup>[7]</sup>

The most notable use of 1.e4 e5 2.Qh5 by a grandmaster occurred in 2005, when U.S. Champion and future World Championship contender Hikaru Nakamura played it in two tournament games. The best known of these was against Indian GM Krishnan Sasikiran at the May 2005 Sigeman Tournament in Copenhagen/Malmö, Denmark.<sup>[9]</sup> Nakamura got a reasonable position out of the opening but lost the game due to a mistake made in the middlegame. He later wrote on the Internet, “I do believe that 2.Qh5 is a playable move, in fact I had a very good position in the game, and was close to winning if I had in fact played 23.e5.”<sup>[10]</sup> The previous month, Nakamura had played 2.Qh5 against GM Nikola Mitkov at the April 2005 HB Global Chess Challenge in Minneapolis. The game ended in a draw after 55 moves.<sup>[11]</sup>

More often the opening is adopted by chess novices, as when actor Woody Harrelson played it against Garry Kasparov in a 1999 exhibition game in Prague.<sup>[12]</sup> Harrelson achieved a draw after being assisted by several grandmasters who were in Prague attending the match between Alexei Shirov and Judit Polgár.<sup>[13]</sup> The next year Kasparov again faced the opening as Black when tennis star Boris Becker played it against him in an exhibition game in New York.<sup>[14]</sup> This time Kasparov won in 17 moves.

### 5.11.2 Assessment

The Danvers Opening violates a conventional opening principle by developing the queen too early, subjecting it to attack (although it is relatively safe after retreating to f3). Nonetheless, the opening causes Black some problems. Left to his own devices, Black would probably develop with ...Nf6, ...Bc5, and ...Nc6. The Danvers Opening hinders this by forcing Black (unless he wants to sacrifice a pawn) to first defend the e-pawn (usually with 2...Nc6), then after 3.Bc4 to either play 3...g6 (virtually committing Black to fianchettoing his king bishop), 3...Qe7 (blocking the bishop), or 3...Qf6 (taking away the knight’s best square). In 2005, the Dutch grandmaster Hans Ree called 2.Qh5:

[...] a provocative but quite sensible move. White’s presumptuous early queen development hopes to make black suffer from psychological indifference in a similar fashion to the Scandinavian defense. If black becomes careless in simply warding off the queen, he often fails to develop his pieces and likely runs into early trouble. Black is forced to play into White’s hands, whether he likes it or not. Thus, even if black plays well, he may be unable to truly understand white’s motives.<sup>[15]</sup>

As with the similar Napoleon Opening (2.Qf3?!), White hopes for the Scholar’s Mate, e.g. 2.Qh5 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6?? 4.Qxf7#. In both cases, Black can easily avoid the trap, but 2.Qf3 does not pose the impediments to natural development of Black’s pieces that 2.Qh5 does. Incidentally, Black’s worst possible response to 2.Qh5 is 2...Ke7?? 3.Qxe5#. <sup>[16]</sup> (This line ties with a few others for the fastest possible checkmate by White.) Another bad response is 2...g6?? 3.Qxe5+, losing not only the pawn on e5, but also the rook on h8.

### 5.11.3 Possible continuations

Because most games with the Danvers Opening have been played at weak scholastic tournaments, 2...g6?? has often been seen, losing a rook to 3.Qxe5+. The two moves that have received attention from higher-level players are 2...Nc6 and 2...Nf6!?<sup>[13]</sup>

Main position after 1.e4 e5 2.Qh5 Nc6 3.Bc4 g6 4.Qf3 Nf6 5.Ne2

#### 2...Nc6

This is the most common continuation. Black defends his e5-pawn from the queen and prepares to meet 3.Bc4 with 3...Qe7 (followed by ...Nf6)<sup>[4]</sup> or 3...g6. The latter move is more common, however, and after 4.Qf3 Nf6 5.Ne2 the main position is reached (see diagram). Black can adopt different plans, one of the most popular being 5...Bg7, where 6.0-0 is White’s best try for dynamic play, as 6.d3 d5 will lead to an even position with few attacking chances, and 6.Nbc3 Nb4 is interesting but promises little for White.

Grandmasters Sasikiran and Mitkov both played this move against Nakamura in 2005.<sup>[9][11]</sup> Garry Kasparov also chose it in his exhibition games against Boris Becker and Woody Harrelson.<sup>[12][14]</sup>

#### 2...Nf6!?

Introducing a speculative gambit called the **Kiddie Countergambit**.<sup>[17]</sup> It is not necessary to sacrifice a pawn for development, since the White Queen will have to lose a tempo eventually, however FIDE Master Dennis Monokrousos advocates the move as the “psychologically correct” response.<sup>[18]</sup>

### 5.11.4 See also

- List of chess openings

### 5.11.5 References

- [1] Edward Winter, Danvers Opening at chesshistory.com
- [2] Kentucky Opening, Dubuque Chess Journal, May 1875, page 250 scanned at Hathitrust (original from New York Public Library)
- [3] Bronstein, David, 200 Open Games, chapter 1, page 1, Batsford 1973
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- [18] Dennis Monokroussos, Nakamura-Sasikiran and Junk Openings, thechessmind.net, 23 April 2005

### 5.11.6 External links

- Jake, Joe and Garry (column by Hans Ree)
- Nakamura-Sasikiran, Sigeman 2005
- Article on Parham in Indianapolis paper 2007
- Games with the Danvers Opening on ChessGames.com

## 5.12 Vienna Game

The **Vienna Game** is an opening in chess that begins with the moves:

1. e4 e5
2. Nc3

White's second move is less common than 2.Nf3, and is also more recent. A book reviewer wrote in the *New York Times* in 1888 that "since Morphy only one new opening has been introduced, the 'Vienna'."<sup>[1]</sup>

The original idea behind the Vienna Game was to play a delayed King's Gambit with f4, but in modern play White often plays more quietly (for example by fianchettoing his king's bishop with g3 and Bg2). Black most often continues with 2...Nf6. The opening can also lead to the **Frankenstein–Dracula Variation**.

Weaver W. Adams famously claimed that the Vienna Game led to a forced win for White.<sup>[2]</sup> Nick de Firmian concludes in the 15th edition of *Modern Chess Openings*, however, that the opening leads to equality with best play by both sides.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 5.12.1 2...Nf6

White has three main options: 3.f4, 3.Bc4, and 3.g3. Note that 3.Nf3 transposes to the **Petrov's Three Knights Game**, which after 3...Nc6 leads to the **Four Knights Game**.

#### 3.f4

At **grandmaster** level, the move 3.f4..., the **Vienna Gambit**, is considered too risky an opening.<sup>[4]</sup> It is best met by 3...d5, striking back in the center, since 3...exf4 4.e5 Qe7 5.Qe2 forces Black's knight to retreat. After 4.fxe5 Nxe4, 5.Qf3 is well met by 5...Nc6, with the point 6.Nxe4 Nd4. 5.d3 is also possible, but the normal continuation is 5.Nf3. White obtains open lines and attacking chances, but Black can usually hold the balance with correct play.

### 3.Bc4

The move 3.Bc4 leads to a position which can also be reached from the **Bishop's Opening** (1.e4 e5 2.Bc4). Black has several choices here; 3...Bc5 can transpose to the **King's Gambit Declined** after 4.d3 d6 5.f4 Nc6 6.Nf3; after 3...Nc6 4.d3, 4...Na5, 4...Bc5 or 4...d6 are all playable; 3...Bb4 4.f4 Nxe4 5.Qh5 0-0 leads to wild but probably equal play, according to de Firmian in *MCO-15*.<sup>[5]</sup> Also possible is 3...Nxe4, when 4.Nxe4 d5, **forking** bishop and knight, is fine for Black.<sup>[6]</sup> The attractive-looking 4.Bxf7+ is weak; after 4...Kxf7 5.Nxe4 d5! (inferior is 5...Nc6 6.Qf3+, when Black cannot play 6...Kg8?? because of 7.Ng5! 1–0 Davids–Diggle, London Banks League 1949, while 6...Ke8 leaves the king awkwardly placed in the center)<sup>[7][8]</sup> 6.Qf3+ (6.Qh5+ g6 7.Qxe5? Bh6! wins for Black)<sup>[9]</sup> Kg8 7.Ng5!? (hoping for 7...Qxg5?? 8.Qxd5+ and **mate** next move, Schottlaender–Ed. Lasker, simultaneous exhibition, Breslau c. 1902) Qd7!, with a large advantage for Black in view of his **bishop pair** and pawn center.<sup>[10][11]</sup> After 3...Nxe4, White usually continues instead 4.Qh5 (threatening Qxf7#) 4...Nd6 5.Bb3 when Black can either go for the relatively quiet waters of 5...Be7 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Nxe5 g6 8.Qe2 (or 8.Nxc6 dxc6 9.Qe5 0-0) Nd4 9.Qd3 Nxb3 10.axb3 Nf5 11.0-0 d6, which led to equality in **Anand–Ivanchuk, Roquebrune 1992**.<sup>[6]</sup> or the complexities of 5...Nc6 6.Nb5 g6 7.Qf3 f5 8.Qd5 Qe7 9.Nxc7+ Kd8 10.Nxa8 b6, which the Irish correspondence chess player and theorist **Tim Harding** extravagantly dubbed “the **Frankenstein–Dracula Variation**.”<sup>[12]</sup>

### 3.g3

The move 3.g3, the **Mieses Variation**, is a quiet continuation in which White fianchettoes his king's bishop, a line played by **Vasily Smyslov** on a few occasions, most notably in a win over **Lev Polugaevsky** in the 1961 USSR Championship. That game continued 3...d5 4.exd5 Nxd5 5.Bg2 Be6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.0-0 Be7 8.Re1 Bf6 9.Ne4 0-0 10.d3 Be7 11.a3 Nb6 12.b4, resulting in a position which the **Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings** assesses as slightly better for White. The main line today, however, is considered to be 5...Nxc3 6.bxc3 Bd6 7.Nf3 0-0 8.0-0. A major alternative for Black is 3...Bc5 (3...Nc6 normally transposes into one of the other lines).

### 3.a3

In addition to these lines, the late American master **Ariel Mengarini** advocated the whimsical 3.a3, sometimes called **Mengarini's Opening**. It is not a serious try for advantage, but is essentially a useful waiting move that gives White an improved version of Black's position after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3

Nc6. First, the “**Reversed Ruy Lopez**” with 3...Bb4 is ruled out. Second, after 3...d5, 4.exd5 Nxd5 5.Qh5!? gives White an improved version of the **Steinitz Variation** of the **Scotch Game**, since Black can never play ...Nb4, an important idea for White in the mirror-image position. Third, after 3...Bc5, 4.Nf3 gives a reversed **Two Knights Defense**. Then the typical 4...Ng4 may be met by 5.d4 exd4 6.Na4, when 6...Bb4+, White's usual move in the mirror-image position, is impossible. After 4...Ng4, White may also play improved versions of the **Ulvestad Variation** (6.b4 in the above line) and **Fritz Variation** (6.Nd5 c6 7.b4), since when White plays b4 his pawn is protected, unlike in the mirror-image position. If Black plays more quietly with 3...Bc5 4.Nf3 Nc6, then 5.Nxe5! Nxe5 6.d4 gives White some advantage. The best line for Black may be 3...Bc5 4.Nf3 d5 5.exd5 0-0 (better than 5...e4 6.d4, when the normal 6...Bb4 is impossible), and if 6.Nxe5, 6...Re8 7.d4 Bxd4! 8.Qxd4 Nc6, as in the mirror-image line. Also possible is 3...Bc5 4.Nf3 d6, when Black stands well after 5.Bc4 Be6, while 5.d4 cxd4 6.Nxd4 gives White little or no advantage.

## 5.12.2 2...Nc6

White again has three main options, 3.Bc4, 3.f4, and 3.g3. Note that 3.Nf3 transposes to the **Three Knights Game**, which after 3...Nf6 leads to the **Four Knights Game**.

### 3.Bc4

Most often, White plays 3.Bc4, when the solid 3...Nf6 transposes to the 2...Nf6 3.Bc4 Nc6 line. Weaker is 3.Bc4 Bc5, when 4.Qg4! is awkward to meet. 4...Kf8 and 4...g6 are thought the best moves, but neither is too appealing for Black. The natural 4...Qf6?? loses to 5.Nd5! Qxf2+ 6.Kd1, when White's king is in no real danger, and White has multiple threats: 7.Qxg7; 7.Nxc7+; and 7.Nh3 Qd4 8.d3 threatening to trap Black's queen with 9.c3.<sup>[13]</sup>

### 3.f4

**Hamppe–Muzio Gambit** The Hamppe–Muzio Gambit (or Vienna Hamppe–Muzio Gambit) is characterised by the moves: 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 exf4 4.Nf3 g5 5.Bc4 g4 6.0-0 gxf3 7.Qxf3 (diagram).

As with its close relative, the sharp **Muzio Gambit**, White sacrifices the knight on f3 in return for a powerful attack against the black king. It is named after Austrian theoretician **Carl Hamppe** and classified under **ECO** code C25.

The **Dubois Variation** continues 7...Ne5 8.Qxf4 Qf6.

**Steinitz Gambit** The Steinitz Gambit, 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 exf4 4.d4, was a favorite of **Wilhelm Steinitz**, the first **World Champion**. White allows Black to misplace White's king with 4...Qh4+ 5.Ke2 (diagram), hoping to prove that White's pawn center and the exposed position of Black's queen are more significant factors. Unlike Steinitz, who famously opined that, "The King is a fighting piece!", few modern players are willing to expose their king this way. The Steinitz Gambit is thus rarely seen today.

### 3.g3

This move is known as the **Paulsen Variation**.

### 5.12.3 2...Bc5

This is an offbeat but playable alternative, as played (for example) by former world champion **José Raúl Capablanca** against **Ilya Kan** at Moscow 1936.<sup>[14]</sup> Some possible moves are 3.Bc4, 3.Nf3, and 3.f4. With move 3.Bc4, ...Nf6 and ...Nc6 can be found above, or Black can play ...d6.

White can continue with 3.Nf3, when 3...Nc6?! (transposing to the **Three Knights Game**) 4.Nxe5! Nxe5 5.d4 Bd6 6.dxe5 Bxe5 7.Bd3 leads to a large advantage for White.<sup>[15]</sup> Stronger is 3...d6! Then 4.Na4 Nd7 5.d3 Ngf6 6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 c6 8.Nxc5 Nxc5 9.Ne1 Ne6 10.c3 d5 is about even.<sup>[16]</sup> The main line runs 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Nf6 6.Bg5 (6.Be2 d5 7.e5 Ne4 8.0-0 Nxc3 leads to equality<sup>[16]</sup>) h6 7.Bh4 0-0 8.Nb3 and now de Firmian in *MCO-15* gives 8...Bb4 9.Bd3 Re8 10.0-0 Bxc3 11.bxc3 g5! 12.Bg3 Nxe4, when Black's "chances are at least equal".<sup>[16]</sup>

After 3.f4, ...d6 leads to the **King's Gambit Declined**.<sup>[16]</sup> Weak is 3.Qg4 Nf6! 4.Qxg7 Rg8 5.Qh6 Bxf2+ when Black had a large advantage in Tsikhelashvili–Karpov, USSR 1968, since 6.Kxf2?? Ng4+ would win White's queen.<sup>[16]</sup> Another offbeat possibility is 3.Na4, when 3...Bxf2+!? 4.Kxf2 Qh4+ 5.Ke3 Qxf4+ 6.Kd3 d5 leads to wild complications, as in the famous **Immortal Draw game Hamppe–Meitner, Vienna 1872**. However, the quiet 3...Be7 leaves Black with a good game.<sup>[17]</sup>

### 5.12.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places
- Vienna Game, Würzburger Trap

### 5.12.5 References

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- [13] Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen writes that after 5.Nd5! "it's over, as detailed analysis reveals." Larry Evans, Svetozar Gligorić, Vlastimil Hort, Paul Keres, Bent Larsen, Tigran Petrosian, and Lajos Portisch (1974), *How to Open a Chess Game*, RHM Press, p. 172. ISBN 0-89058-003-0.
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### 5.12.6 Literature

- László Jakobetz, László Somlai: *Die Wiener Partie*. Dreier, 1994, ISBN 3-929376-12-1

## 5.13 Frankenstein-Dracula Variation 5. Bb3

The **Frankenstein–Dracula Variation** is a chess opening, usually considered a branch of the **Vienna Game**, but can also be reached from the **Bishop’s Opening**. The opening involves many complications; however, with accurate play the opening is playable for both sides.

The variation was given its name by **Tim Harding** in his 1976 book on the Vienna Game, in which he said that the bloodthirstiness of the character of play was such that “a game between **Dracula** and the **Frankenstein Monster** would not seem out of place.”

The line is seen extremely infrequently in top-level play. **Ivanchuk** used the opening against **Viswanathan Anand** in Roquebrune in 1992 in a game that ended as a draw. **Alexei Shirov** had also played this in a simultaneous exhibition with black in Canada 2011.

Swedish grandmaster **Ulf Andersson** recommended 5.Qxe5+ Qe7 6.Qxe7+ Bxe7 7.Be2, claiming that White has some advantage. (See **Harding’s** 1998 column cited below.)

Position after 10...b6

### 5... Nc6

5...Be7 (returning the pawn) is a quieter alternative, for example 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Nxe5 0-0 8.0-0 Nxe5 9.Qxe5 Bf6 10.Qf4 Ne8 11.d4 c6 12.d5; however, White has a better game (**Larsen**; **Nielsen–Muir**, corr. 1971).

### 6. Nb5 g6 7. Qf3 f5

**David Bronstein** once won a game with 7...f6!? 8.Nxc7+ Qxc7 9.Qxf6 b6 10.Qxh8 Bb7 11.Qxh7 0-0-0, but he has not found followers.<sup>[3]</sup> If Black tries 7...Nf5 then White continues 8.g4 (also strong is 8.Qd5 Nh6 9.d4 d6 10.Bxh6 Be6 11.Qf3 Bxh6 12.d5+/- **Hughes-Fogarty**, **Pittsburgh** 2013) 8...a6 9.gxf5 axb5 10.fxg6 Qe7 11.gxf7+ Kd8 12.Ne2 (preventing ...Nd4) e4 13.Qg3+/-.

### 5.13.1 Annotated moves

#### 1. e4 e5 2. Nc3 Nf6 3. Bc4

Another common way of reaching the same position is 1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 (Bishop’s Opening) Nf6 3.Nc3.

#### 3... Nxe4

This is the move that defines the Frankenstein–Dracula Variation. White cannot of course win material immediately, since 4.Nxe4 brings 4...d5.

#### 4. Qh5

4.Nxe4 d5 is considered to give Black no problems. 4.Bxf7+ Kxf7 5.Nxe4 is considered good for Black as long as he avoids 5...Nc6 (5...d5 6.Qf3+ Kg8 7.Ng5! and White wins (7...Qxg5 8.Qd5#). 4.Qh5 threatens Qxf7#, a threat that White continues to renew in this line.

#### 4... Nd6

This move is the only good response to White’s dual threats against f7 and e5; 4...Ng5 would be met by 5.d4 Ne6 6.dxe5 with some advantage. Also possible is 6.d5, when 6...g6 loses to 7.dxe6, as in **Böök–Heidenheim** 1925.<sup>[1]</sup> Instead, 6.d5 Nd4 led to very complicated play in **Kis–Csato**, **Hungarian Team Championship** 1993.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 8. Qd5 Qe7

8...Qf6 has also been tried and white has to be careful. For instance, after 9 Nxc7+ Kd8 10 Nxa8 b6 11. d3 Bb7 12.h4 as in the main line, black has the strong 12...Ne7! that he cannot play with the queen on e7 (white has now a very poor game). Unfortunately, after 11.d4 Nxd4 12.Nxb6 axb6 13.Nf3 Bb7 white can play 14.Qxd4! (that would be a terrible move with the black queen on e7) and black’s attack is now less sharp after 14...exd4 15.Bg5 Qxg5 16.Nxg5

### 9. Nxc7+ Kd8 10. Nxa8

Black almost always continues **10...b6** (see diagram), preparing Bb7 to trap the knight. Black is at the moment a rook down, but will eventually regain the knight, leaving him down the exchange. In return, Black will play for an attack.

### 5.13.2 Competing strategies

In return for his **material**, Black has a good **pawn centre** and his **bishops** will be well placed on the **long diagonals**. He will try to justify his **sacrifice** by avoiding a **queen exchange** and attempting to **checkmate** White. White will secure his **king** (usually by **castling queenside**) and his **queen** (which for the moment is somewhat short of squares), hold onto his extra material and eventually may go on the offensive and attack the black king stuck in the centre of the board. Whether Black has sufficient compensation is a matter of opinion. One possible continuation is **11. d3 Bb7 12. h4** (threatening to win Black's queen with Bg5) **12... f4 13. Qf3 Nd4** (13...Bh6 14.Bd2 is also possible) **14. Qg4** (a 1969 recommendation by **Anthony Santasiere**, threatening to trade queens with Qg5), when Black chooses between 14...Bh6, 14...Bg7, and 14...Bxa8. (See Harding's 1998 column cited below.)

### 5.13.3 Notable game

Jacob Øst-Hansen vs. **John Nunn**, Teesside 1974<sup>[4]</sup>

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Qh5 Nd6 5.Bb3 Nc6 6.Nb5 g6 7.Qf3 f5 8.Qd5 Qe7 9.Nxc7+ Kd8 10.Nxa8 b6 11.d3 Bb7 12.h4 f4 13.Qf3 Bh6 14.Qg4 e4 15.Bxf4 exd3+ 16.Kf1 Bxf4 17.Qxf4 Rf8 18.Qg3 Ne4 19.Qc7+ Ke8 20.Nh3 Nxf2 21.Nxf2 Qe2+ 22.Kg1 Qxf2+ 23.Kh2 Qxh4+ 24.Kg1 Qd4+ 25.Kh2 Ne5 26.Rhf1 Ng4+ 27.Kh3 Qe3+ 28.Kxg4 h5+ 29.Kh4 g5+ 30.Kxh5 Rh8+ 31.Kg6 Be4+ 32.Rf5 Bxf5+ 33.Kxf5 Rf8+ 34.Kg6 Qe4+ 35.Kg7 Qe7+ 36.Kg6 Qf6+ 37.Kh5 Qh8+ 38.Kg4 Qh4# 0–1

### 5.13.4 References

- [1] Böök–Heidenheimo, 1925
- [2] Kis–Csato, Hungarian Team Championship 1993
- [3] Mukhin–Bronstein, USSR 1959
- [4] Øst-Hansen vs. Nunn, 1974

### 5.13.5 External links

- 1996 “Kibitzer” column by Tim Harding (PDF)
- 1998 “Kibitzer” column by Tim Harding
- 167 Games at Chess.com

## 5.14 Alapin's Opening

**Alapin's Opening** is an unusual chess opening that starts with the moves:

1.e4 e5

2.Ne2

It is named after the **Russo-Lithuanian** player and openings analyst **Semyon Alapin** (1856–1923). Although this opening is rarely used, **Ljubojević** (as Black) played against it at **Groningen** in 1970.

### 5.14.1 Description

Alapin's Opening is offbeat, but perfectly playable for White. It is mainly used to avoid highly theoretical lines such as the **Ruy Lopez**, or to surprise the opponent. White intends to play f2–f4 soon. There is similarity to the Smyslov Position (Smyslov–Botvinnik, 1958) if White tries to play something in the lines of g3, Nbc3, d3, Bg2.

However, Alapin's Opening also incurs several problems for White. First, the development of White's light-square bishop, and also of his queen, is blocked, and will require another move of the knight or another pawn move, both of which go against the opening principle to develop the **minor pieces** quickly. Second, the knight on e2, although flexible, has no control over Black's half of the centre, and will need to be moved again to become more useful.

It is relatively easy for Black to equalise in this opening, for example, 2...Nf6, 2...Nc6, and 2...d5 all equalise, although Black should be careful to avoid being caught by surprise by an eventual f2–f4.

### 5.14.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 5.14.3 References

- John Nunn, Graham Burgess, John Emms, and Joe Gallagher (1999). *Nunn's Chess Openings*. Everyman Publishers plc. ISBN 1-85744-221-0.

## 5.15 Diemer-Duhm Gambit

The **French Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. e4 e6

The French has a reputation for **solidity** and resilience, though it can result in a somewhat cramped game for Black in the early stages. Black often gains counterattacking possibilities on the **queenside** while White tends to concentrate on the **kingside**.

### 5.15.1 Basics

Position after 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5

Following the opening moves 1.e4 e6, the game usually continues 2.d4 d5 (see **below** for alternatives). White makes a claim to the centre, while Black immediately challenges the pawn on e4.

White's options include defending the e4 pawn with 3.Nc3 or 3.Nd2, exchanging with 3.exd5, or advancing the pawn with 3.e5, each of which lead to different types of positions. Note that 3.Bd3 allows 3...dxe4 4.Bxe4 Nf6, after which White must concede to Black either a tempo or the advantage of the two bishops.

### 5.15.2 General themes

Typical pawn structure

See the diagram for the **pawn structure** most typical of the French. Black has more space on the **queenside**, so tends to focus on that side of the board, almost always playing ...c7–c5 at some point to attack White's pawn chain at its base, and may follow up by advancing his a- and b-pawns.

Alternatively or simultaneously, Black will play against White's centre, which is cramping his position. The flank attack ...c7–c5 is usually insufficient to achieve this, so Black will often play ...f7–f6. If White supports the pawn on e5 by playing f2–f4, then Black has two common ideas. Black may strike directly at the f-pawn by playing ...g7–g5. The pawn on g5 may also threaten to advance to g4 to drive away a white knight on f3, augmenting Black's play against the White centre. Another idea is to play ...fxe5, and if White recaptures with fxe5, then Black gains an open f-file for his rook. Then, as White usually has a knight on f3 guarding his pawns on d4 and e5, Black may **sacrifice the exchange** with ...Rxf3 to destroy the white centre and attack the king. On the other hand, if White plays dxe5, then the a7–g1 diagonal is opened, making it less desirable for White to **castle kingside**.

After 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.f4 0-0 8.Nf3 c5 9.Bd3

White usually tries to exploit his extra space on the king-

side, where he will often play for a mating attack. White tries to do this in the **Alekhine**–Chatard attack, for example. Another example is the following line of the Classical French: 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.f4 0-0 8.Nf3 c5 9.Bd3 (see diagram). White's light-square bishop eyes the weak h7-pawn, which is usually defended by a knight on f6 but here it has been pushed away by e5. A typical way for White to continue his attack is 9...cxd4 10.Bxh7+ Kxh7 11.Ng5+ when Black must give up his queen to avoid being mated, continuing with 11...Qxg5 12.fxg5 dxc3. Black has three minor pieces for the queen, which gives him a slight material superiority, but his king is vulnerable and White has good attacking chances.

Apart from a piece attack, White may play for the advance of his kingside pawns (an especially common idea in the endgame), which usually involves f2–f4, g2–g4 and then f4–f5 to utilise his natural spatial advantage on that side of the board. A white pawn on f5 can be very strong as it may threaten to capture on e6 or advance to f6. Sometimes pushing the h-pawn to h5 or h6 may also be effective. A modern idea is for White to gain space on the queenside by playing a2–a3 and b2–b4. If implemented successfully, this will further restrict Black's pieces.

#### Tarrasch–Teichmann, 1912

Position after 15...Nxc5

One of the drawbacks of the French Defence for Black is his queen's bishop, which is blocked in by his pawn on e6. If Black is unable to free it by means of the pawn breaks ...c5 and/or ...f6, it can remain passive throughout the game. An often-cited example of the potential weakness of this bishop is **S. Tarrasch–R. Teichmann, San Sebastián 1912**, in which the diagrammed position was reached after fifteen moves of a Classical French.

Black's position is passive because his light-square bishop is hemmed in by pawns on a6, b5, d5, e6 and f7. White will probably try to exchange Black's knight, which is the only one of his pieces that has any scope. Although it might be possible for Black to hold on for a **draw**, it is not easy and, barring any mistakes by White, Black will have few chances to create counterplay, which is why, for many years, the classical lines fell out of favour, and 3...Bb4 began to be seen more frequently after World War I, due to the efforts of Nimzowitsch and Botvinnik. In Tarrasch–Teichmann, White won after 41 moves. In order to avoid this fate, Black usually makes it a priority early in the game to find a useful post for the bishop. Black can play ...Bd7–a4 to attack a pawn on c2, which occurs in many lines of the Winawer Variation. If Black's f-pawn has moved to f6, then Black may also consider bringing the bishop to g6 or h5 via d7 and e8. If White's light-square bishop is on the f1–a6 diagonal,

Black can try to exchange it by playing ...b6 and ...Ba6, or ...Qb6 followed by ...Bd7–Bb5.

A general theme in the Advance French is that White would like to put his light-square bishop on d3, maximising its scope. White cannot play this move immediately after 5...Qb6 without losing the d4 pawn. Black cannot gain the extra pawn immediately since 6.Bd3 cxd4 7.cxd4 Nxd4? 8.Nxd4 Qxd4?? 9.Bb5+ wins the black queen by a **discovered attack** with check. Thus, **theory** holds that Black should play 7...Bd7 instead to obviate this idea. White has often sacrificed the d-pawn anyway by continuing 8.0-0 Nxd4 9.Nxd4 Qxd4 10.Nc3. This is the Milner-Barry Gambit, named after Sir **Stuart Milner-Barry**, considered of marginal soundness by present-day theory, and has never had proponents at the highest levels of play.

Another theme is that White wants to expand on the kingside and attack the black king; the long-term advantages in many French structures lie with Black, so White is often more or less forced to attack by various methods, such as driving the black knight off f5 with g4 or playing h4–h5 to expel the knight from g6. Because of the blocked centre, sacrificial mating attacks are often possible. It is said by French players that the **classic bishop sacrifice** (Bd3xh7) should be evaluated every move. Black, however, often welcomes an attack as the French is notorious for producing defensive tactics and maneuvers that leave Black up material for an endgame. **Viktor Korchnoi** who, along with Botvinnik, was the strongest player who advocated the French, talked about how he would psychologically lure his opponents into attacking him so that they would eventually sacrifice material and he would halt his opponent's army and win the **endgame** easily.

### 5.15.3 Main line: 2.d4 d5

#### 3.Nc3

Played in over 40% of all games after 1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5, 3. Nc3 is the most commonly seen line against the French. Black has three main options, 3...dxe4 (the **Rubinstein Variation**), 3...Bb4 (the **Winawer Variation**) and 3...Nf6 (the **Classical Variation**). An eccentric idea is 3...Nc6!? 4.Nf3 Nf6 with the idea of 5.e5 Ne4; German **IM** Helmut Reebschlaeger has been fond of this move.

**Rubinstein Variation:** 3...dxe4 After 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4

This variation is named after **Akiba Rubinstein** and can also arise from a different move order: 3.Nd2 dxe4. White has freer development and more space in the centre, which

Black intends to neutralise by playing ...c7–c5 at some point. This solid line has undergone a modest revival, featuring in many GM games as a drawing weapon but theory still gives White a slight edge. After 3... dxe4 4. Nxe4, Black has the following options:

- The most popular line is: 4...Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 when Black is ready for ...c5.
- 4...Bd7 5.Nf3 Bc6 (the **Fort Knox Variation**) activating the light-square bishop, which is often played by **Alexander Rustemov**.

**Winawer Variation: 3...Bb4** This variation, named after **Szymon Winawer** and pioneered by Nimzowitsch and Botvinnik, is one of the main systems in the French, due chiefly to the latter's efforts in the 1940s, becoming the most often seen rejoinder to 3.Nc3, though in the 1980s, the Classical Variation with 3...Nf6 began a revival, and has since become more popular.

3... Bb4 pins the knight on c3, forcing White to resolve the central tension. White normally clarifies the central situation for the moment with 4. e5, gaining space and hoping to show that Black's b4-bishop is misplaced. The main line then is: 4... c5 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. bxc3, resulting in the diagrammed position:

After 3...Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3

While White has doubled pawns on the queenside, which form the basis for Black's counterplay, they can also help White since they strengthen his centre and give him a semi-open b-file. White has a spatial advantage on the kingside, where Black is even weaker than usual because he has traded off his dark-square bishop. Combined with the bishop pair, this gives White attacking chances, which he must attempt to utilise as the long-term features of this pawn structure favour Black.

In the diagrammed position, Black most frequently plays 6... Ne7 (The main alternative is 6...Qc7, which can simply transpose to main lines after 7.Qg4 Ne7, but Black also has the option of 7.Qg4 f5 or ...f6. 6...Qa5 has recently become a popular alternative). Now White can exploit the absence of Black's dark-square bishop by playing 7. Qg4, giving Black two choices: he may sacrifice his kingside pawns with 7...Qc7 8.Qxg7 Rg8 9.Qxh7 cxd4 but destroy White's centre in return, the so-called "**Poisoned Pawn Variation**"; or he can play 7...0-0 8.Bd3 Nbc6, which avoids giving up material, but leaves the king on the flank where White is trying to attack. Experts on the 7.Qg4 line include **Judit Polgár**.

If the tactical complications of 7.Qg4 are not to White's taste, 7.Nf3 and 7.a4 are good positional alternatives:

7. **Nf3** is a natural developing move, and White usually follows it up by developing the king's bishop to d3 or e2 (occasionally to b5) and castling kingside. This is called the Winawer Advance Variation. This line often continues **7... Bd7 8. Bd3 c4 9. Be2 Ba4 10. 0-0 Qa5 11. Bd2 Nbc6 12. Ng5 h6 13. Nh3 0-0-0**. Its assessment is unclear, but most likely Black would be considered "comfortable" here.

The purpose behind 7. **a4** is threefold: it prepares Bc1–a3, taking advantage of the absence of Black's dark-square bishop. It also prevents Black from playing ...Qa5–a4 or ...Bd7–a4 attacking c2, and if Black plays ...b6 (followed by ...Ba6 to trade off the bad bishop), White may play a5 to attack the b6-pawn.

**Sidelines** 5th move deviations for White include:

- 5.Qg4
- 5.dxc5
- 5.Nf3
- 5.Bd2

4th move deviations for White include:

- 4.exd5 exd5, transposing to a line of the Exchange Variation.
- 4.Ne2 (the **Alekhine Gambit**) 4...dxe4 5.a3 Be7 (5...Bxc3+ is necessary if Black wants to try to hold the pawn) 6.Nxe4 to prevent Black from doubling his pawns.
- 4.Bd3 defending e4.
- 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 dxe4 6.Qg4, another attempt to exploit Black's weakness on g7.
- 4.e5 c5 5.Bd2, again preventing the doubled pawns and making possible 6.Nb5, where the knight may hop into d6 or simply defend d4.
- 4.Bd2 (an old move sometimes played by Nezhmetdinov, notably against Mikhail Tal)

Deviations for Black include:

- 4...Ne7 although this move usually transposes to the main line.
- 4...b6 followed by ...Ba6, or 4...Qd7 with the idea of meeting 5.Qg4 with 5...f5. However, theory currently prefers White's chances in both lines.

- Another popular way for Black to deviate is 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Ba5, the **Armenian Variation**, as its theory and practice have been much enriched by players from that country, the most notable of whom is **Rafael Vaganian**. Black maintains the pin on the knight, which White usually tries to break by playing 6.b4 cxb4 7.Qg4 or 7.Nb5 (usually 7.Nb5 bxa3+ 8.c3 Bc7 9.Bxa3 and white has the upper hand).

**Classical Variation: 3...Nf6** Classical Variation 3...Nf6

This is another major system in the French. White can continue with the following options:

**4.Bg5** White threatens 5.e5, attacking the pinned knight. Black has a number of ways to meet this threat:

- **Burn Variation**, named after **Amos Burn** is the most common reply at the top level: **4... dxe4 5. Nxe4** and usually there now follows: **5... Be7 6. Bxf6 Bxf6 7. Nf3 Nd7** or **7... 0-0**, resulting in a position resembling those arising from the Rubinstein Variation. However, here Black has the bishop pair, with greater dynamic chances (although White's knight is well placed on e4), so this line is more popular than the Rubinstein and has long been a favourite of **Evgeny Bareev**. Black can also try **5... Be7 6. Bxf6 gxf6**, as played by **Alexander Morozevich** and **Gregory Kaidanov**; by following up with ...f5 and ...Bf6, Black obtains active piece play in return for his shattered pawn structure. Another line that resembles the Rubinstein is **5... Nbd7 6. Nf3 Be7** (6...h6 is also tried) **7. Nxf6+ Bxf6**.
- **4... Be7 5. e5 Nfd7** used to be the main line and remains important, even though the Burn Variation has overtaken it in popularity. The usual continuation is **6. Bxe7 Qxe7 7. f4 0-0 8. Nf3 c5**, when White has a number of options, including 9.Bd3, 9.Qd2 and 9.dxc5. An alternative for White is the **gambit 6. h4**, which was devised by **Adolf Albin** and played by Chatard, but not taken seriously until the game **Alekhine–Fahrni**, Mannheim 1914. It is known today as the **Albin–Chatard Attack** or the **Alekhine–Chatard Attack**. After **6... Bxg5 7. hxg5 Qxg5 8. Nh3 Qe7 9. Nf4 Nc6 10. Qg4** (the reason for 8.Nh3 rather than 8.Nf3), White has sacrificed a pawn to open the h-file, thereby increasing his attacking chances on the kingside. Black may also decline the gambit in several ways such **6... a6** and **6... f6**, but most strong players prefer **6... c5**.
- A third choice for Black is to counterattack with the **McCutcheon Variation**. In this variation, the sec-

ond player ignores White's threat of e4-e5 and instead plays **4... Bb4**. The main line continues: **5. e5 h6 6. Bd2 Bxc3 7. bxc3 Ne4 8. Qg4**. At this point Black may play 8...g6, which weakens the kingside dark squares but keeps the option of castling queenside, or 8...Kf8. The McCutcheon Variation is named for John Lindsay McCutcheon of Philadelphia (1857–1905), who brought the variation to public attention when he used it to defeat **World Champion Steinitz** in a simultaneous exhibition in Manhattan in 1885.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>

**4.e5 The Steinitz Variation** (named after **Wilhelm Steinitz**) is **4. e5 Nfd7 5. f4** (the most common but White has other options: 5.Nce2, the **Shirov–Anand Variation**), White gets ready to bolster his centre with c2–c3 and f2–f4. Or 5.Nf3 (aiming for piece play) **5... c5 6. Nf3 Nc6 7. Be3** (7.Nce2 transposes to the Shirov–Anand Variation; a trap is 7.Be2 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Ndx5! 9.fxe5 Qh4+ winning a pawn), Black has several options. He may step up pressure on d4 by playing 7...Qb6 or 7...cxd4 8.Nxd4 Qb6, or choose to complete his development, either beginning with the kingside by playing 7...cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5, or with the queenside by playing 7...a6 8.Qd2 b5.

#### Tarrasch Variation: 3.Nd2

After 3.Nd2 Nf6

The **Tarrasch Variation** is named after **Siebert Tarrasch**. This move became particularly popular during the 1970s and early 1980s when **Anatoly Karpov** used it to great effect. Though less aggressive than the alternate 3.Nc3, it is still used by top-level players seeking a small, safe advantage.

Like 3.Nc3, 3.Nd2 protects e4, but is different in several key respects: it does not block White's c-pawn from advancing, which means he can play c3 at some point to support his d4-pawn. Hence, it avoids the **Winawer Variation** as 3...Bb4 is now readily answered by 4.c3. On the other hand, 3.Nd2 develops the knight to an arguably less active square than 3.Nc3, and in addition, it hems in White's dark-square bishop. Hence, white will typically have to spend an extra tempo moving the knight from d2 at some point before developing said bishop.

- **3... c5 4. exd5** and now Black has two ways to recapture:
- **4... exd5** this was a staple of many old Karpov–Korchnoi battles, including seven games in their 1974 match, usually leads to Black having an isolated queen's pawn (see **isolated pawn**). The main line continues **5. Ngf3 Nc6 6. Bb5 Bd6**

**7. 0-0 Nge7 8. dxc5 Bxc5 9. Nb3 Bb6** with a position where, if White can neutralise the activity of Black's pieces in the middlegame, he will have a slight advantage in the ending. Another possibility for White is 5.Bb5+ Bd7 (5...Nc6 is also possible) 6.Qe2+ Be7 7.dxc5 to trade off the bishops and make it more difficult for Black to regain the pawn.

- **4... Qxd5** is an important alternative for Black; the idea is to trade his c- and d-pawns for White's d- and e-pawns, leaving Black with an extra centre pawn. This constitutes a slight structural advantage, but in return White gains time for development by harassing Black's queen. This interplay of static and dynamic advantages is the reason why this line has become popular in the last decade. Play usually continues **5. Ngf3 cxd4 6. Bc4 Qd6 7. 0-0 Nf6** (preventing 8.Ne4) **8. Nb3 Nc6 9. Nbx4 Nxd4**, and here White may stay in the middlegame with 10.Nxd4 or offer the trade of queens with 10.Qxd4, with the former far more commonly played today.
- **3... Nf6** While the objective of 3...c5 was to break open the centre, **3... Nf6** aims to close it. After **4. e5 Nfd7 5. Bd3 c5 6. c3 Nc6** (6...b6 intends ...Ba6 next to get rid of Black's "bad" light-square bishop, a recurring idea in the French) **7. Ne2** (leaving f3 open for the queen's knight) **7... cxd4 8. cxd4 f6 9. exf6 Nxf6 10. Nf3 Bd6** Black has freed his pieces at the cost of having a **backward pawn** on e6. White may also choose to preserve his pawn on e5 by playing **4. e5 Nfd7 5. c3 c5 6. f4 Nc6 7. Ndf3**, but his development is slowed as a result, and Black will gain dynamic chances if he can open the position to advantage.
- **3... Nc6** is known as the **Guimard Variation**: after 4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nd7 Black will exchange White's cramping e-pawn next move by ...f6. However, Black does not exert any pressure on d4 because he cannot play ...c5, so White should maintain a slight advantage, with 6.Be2 or 6.Nb3.
- **3... Be7** is known as the **Morozevich Variation**.<sup>[4]</sup> A fashionable line among top GMs in recent years, this odd-looking move aims to prove that every White move now has its drawbacks, e.g. after 4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nfd7 White cannot play f4, whereas 4.Bd3 c5 5.dxc5 Nf6 and 4.e5 c5 5. Qg4 Kf8!? lead to obscure complications. 3...h6?!, with a similar rationale, has also gained some adventurous followers in recent years, including GM **Alexander Morozevich**.
- Another rare line is **3... a6**, which gained some popularity in the 1970s. Similar to 3...Be7, the idea is to

play a waiting move to make White declare his intentions before Black commits to a plan of his own. 3...a6 also controls the b5-square, which is typically useful for Black in most French lines because, for example, White no longer has the option of playing Bb5.

### Exchange Variation: 3.exd5 exd5

After 3.exd5 exd5

Many players who begin with 1.e4 find that the French Defence is the most difficult opening for them to play against due to the closed structure and unique strategies of the system. Thus, many players choose to play the exchange so that the position becomes simple and clearcut. White makes no effort to exploit the advantage of the first move, and has often chosen this line with expectation of an early draw, and indeed draws often occur if neither side breaks the symmetry. An extreme example was *Capablanca–Maróczy, Lake Hopatcong* 1926, which went: 4.Bd3 Bd6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.0-0 7.Bg5 Bg4 8.Re1 Nbd7 9.Nbd2 c6 10.c3 Qc7 11.Qc2 Rfe8 12.Bh4 Bh5 13.Bg3 Bxg3 14.hxg3 Bg6 15.Rxe8+ Rxe8 16.Bxg6 hxg6 17.Re1 Rxe1+ 18.Nxe1 Ne8 19.Nd3 Nd6 20.Qb3 a6 21.Kf1  $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$  (the game can be viewed [here](#)).

Despite the symmetrical pawn structure, White cannot force a draw. An obsession with obtaining one sometimes results in embarrassment for White, as in *Tatai–Korchnoi, Beer Sheva* 1978, which continued 4.Bd3 c5!? 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Qe2+ Be7 7.dxc5 Nf6 8.h3 0-0 9.0-0 Bxc5 10.c3 Re8 11.Qc2 Qd6 12.Nbd2 Qg3 13.Bf5 Re2 14.Nd4 Nxd4 0-1 (the game can be watched [here](#)). A less extreme example was *Mikhail Gurevich–Short, Manila* 1990 where White, a strong Russian *grandmaster*, played openly for the draw but was ground down by Short in 42 moves.

To create genuine winning chances, White will often play c2–c4 at some stage to put pressure on Black's d5-pawn. Black can give White an isolated queen's pawn by capturing on c4, but this gives White's pieces greater freedom, which may lead to attacking chances. This occurs in lines such as 3.exd5 exd5 4.c4 (played by GMs *Normunds Miezis* and *Maurice Ashley*) and 4.Nf3 Bd6 5.c4, which may transpose to the *Petroff*. Conversely, if White declines to do this, Black may play ...c7–c5 himself, e.g. 4.Bd3 c5, as in the above-cited *Tatai–Korchnoi* game.

If c2–c4 is not played, White and Black have two main piece setups. White may put his pieces on Nf3, Bd3, Bg5 (pinning the black knight), Nc3, Qd2 or the queen's knight can go to d2 instead and White can support the centre with c3 and perhaps play Qb3. Conversely, when the queen's knight is on c3, the king's knight may go to e2 when the enemy bishop and knight can be kept out of the key squares

e4 and g4 by f3. When the knight is on c3 in the first and last of the above strategies, White may choose either short or long castling. The positions are so symmetrical that the options and strategies are the same for both sides.

Another way to unbalance the position is for White or Black to castle on opposite sides of the board. An example of this is the line 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Bd6 6.Nf3 Bg4 7.0-0 Nge7 8.Re1 Qd7 9.Nbd2 0-0-0.

### Advance Variation: 3.e5

After 3.e5 c5 4. c3 Nc6 5. Nf3

The main line of the Advance Variation continues **3... c5 4. c3 Nc6 5. Nf3** and then we have a branching point:

**5... Qb6**, the idea is to increase the pressure on d4 and eventually undermine the White centre. The queen also attacks the b2-square, so White's dark-square bishop cannot easily defend the d4-pawn without losing the b2-pawn. White's most common replies are 6.a3 and 6.Be2.

6.a3 is currently the most important line in the Advance: it prepares 7.b4, gaining space on the queenside. Black may prevent this with 6...c4 intending to take *en passant* if White plays b4, which creates a closed game where Black fights for control of the b3-square. On the other hand, Black may continue developing with 6...Nh6, intending ...Nf5, which might seem strange as White can double the pawn with Bxh6, but this is actually considered good for Black. Black plays ...Bg7 and ...0-0 and Black's king has adequate defence and White will miss his apparently 'bad' dark-square bishop.

6.Be2 is the other alternative, aiming simply to castle. Once again, a common Black response is 6...Nh6 intending 7...cxd4 8.cxd4 Nf5 attacking d4. White usually responds to this threat with 7.Bxh6 or 7.b3 preparing Bb2.

**5... Bd7** was mentioned by *Greco* as early as 1620, and was revived and popularised by *Viktor Korchnoi* in the 1970s. Now a main line, the idea behind the move is that since Black usually plays ...Bd7 sooner or later, he plays it right away and waits for White to show his hand. If White plays 6.a3 in response, modern theory says that Black equalises or is better after 6...f6! The lines are complex, but the main point is that a3 is a wasted move if the black queen is not on b6 and so Black uses the extra tempo to attack the white centre immediately.

**5...Nh6** has recently become a popular alternative

There are alternative strategies to **3... c5** that were tried in the early 20th century such as 3...b6, intending to fianchetto the bad bishop and which can transpose to *Owen's Defence* or 3...Nc6, played by *Carlos Guimard*, intending to keep the

bad bishop on c8 or d7 which is passive and obtains little counterplay. Also, 4...Qb6 5.Nf3 Bd7 intending 6...Bb5 to trade off the “bad” queen’s bishop is possible.

### 5.15.4 Early deviations for White

After 1.e4 e6, almost 90 percent of all games continue 2.d4 d5, but White can try other ideas. The most important of these is 2.d3 d5 3.Nd2, with a version of the **King’s Indian Attack**. White will likely play Ngf3, g3, Bg2, 0-0, c3 and/or Re1 in some order on the next few moves. Black has several ways to combat this setup: 3...c5 followed by ...Nc6, ...Bd6, ...Nf6 or ...Nge7 and ...0-0 is common, 3...Nf6 4.Ng3 Nc6 plans ...dxe4 and ...e5 to block in the Bg2, and 3...Nf6 4.Ng3 b6 makes ...Ba6 possible if White’s light-square bishop leaves the a6–f1 diagonal. 2.d3 has been used by many leading players over the years, including GMs **Pal Benko**, **Bobby Fischer** and **Lev Psakhis**.

- 2.f4 is the **Labourdonnais Variation**, named after **Louis-Charles Mahé de La Bourdonnais**, the 19th-century French master.<sup>[5]</sup>
- 2.Qe2 is the **Chigorin Variation**, which discourages 2...d5 because after 3.exd5 the black pawn is pinned, meaning Black would need to recapture with the queen. Black usually replies 2...c5, after which play can resemble the 2.d3 variation or the Closed Variation of the **Sicilian Defence**.
- 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3 is the **Two Knights Variation**: 3...d4 and 3...Nf6 are good replies for Black.
- 2.c4 (attempting to discourage 2...d5 by Black) is the **Steiner Variation**. But Black can reply 2...d5 anyway, when after 3.cxd5 exd5 4.exd5 Nf6 the only way for White to hold on to his extra pawn on d5 is to play 5.Bb5+. Black gets good compensation in return for the pawn, however.
- 2.Bb5 has occasionally been tried. Notably, **Henry Bird** defeated **Max Fleissig** with the variation during the **Vienna 1873 chess tournament**.<sup>[6]</sup>
- 2.b3 leads to the **Réti Gambit** after 2...d5 3.Bb2 dxe4, but Black can also decline it with 3...Nf6 4.e5 Nd7 with White going for f4 and Qg4 before putting the knight on f3.

There are also a few rare continuations after 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5, including 3.Bd3 (the **Schlechter Variation**), 3.Be3 (the **Alapin Gambit**), and 3.c4 (the **Diemer-Duhm Gambit**, which can also be reached via the **Queen’s Gambit Declined**).

### 5.15.5 Early deviations for Black

Although 2...d5 is the most consistent move after 1.e4 e6 2.d4, Black occasionally plays other moves. Chief among them is 2...c5, the **Franco-Benoni Defence**, so-called because it features the c7–c5 push characteristic of the **Benoni Defence**. White may continue 3.d5, when play can transpose into the Benoni, though White has extra options since c2–c4 is not mandated. 3.Nf3, transposing into a normal **Sicilian Defence**, and 3.c3, transposing into a line of the **Alapin Sicilian** (usually arrived at after 1.e4 c5 2.c3 e6 3.d4) are also common. Play may also lead back to the French; for example, 1.e4 e6 2.d4 c5 3.c3 d5 4.e5 transposes into the **Advance Variation**.

### 5.15.6 History

The French Defence is named after a match played by correspondence between the cities of London and Paris in 1834 (although earlier examples of games with the opening do exist). It was **Chamouillet**, one of the players of the Paris team, who persuaded the others to adopt this defence.<sup>[7]</sup>

As a reply to 1.e4, the French Defence received relatively little attention in the nineteenth century compared to 1...e5. The first world chess champion **Wilhelm Steinitz** said “I have never in my life played the French Defence, which is the dullest of all openings”.<sup>[8]</sup> In the early 20th century, **Géza Maróczy** was perhaps the first world-class player to make it his primary weapon against 1.e4. For a long time, it was the third most popular reply to 1.e4, behind only 1...c5 and 1...e5. However, according to the **Mega Database 2007**, in 2006, 1...e6 was second only to the **Sicilian** in popularity.

Historically important contributors to the theory of the defence include **Mikhail Botvinnik**, **Viktor Korchnoi**, **Aron Nimzowitsch**, **Tigran Petrosian**, **Lev Psakhis**, **Wolfgang Uhlmann** and **Rafael Vaganian**. More recently, its leading practitioners include **Evgeny Bareev**, **Alexey Dreev**, **Mikhail Gurevich**, **Alexander Khalifman**, **Smbat Lputian**, **Alexander Morozevich**, **Teimour Radjabov**, **Nigel Short**, **Gata Kamsky**, and **Yury Shulman**.

The **Exchange Variation** was recommended by **Howard Staunton** in the 19th century,<sup>[9]</sup> but has been in decline ever since. In the early 1990s **Garry Kasparov** briefly experimented with it before switching to 3.Nc3. Note that Black’s game is made much easier as his queen’s bishop has been liberated. It has the reputation of giving immediate equality to Black, due to the symmetrical pawn structure.

Like the Exchange, the **Advance Variation** was frequently played in the early days of the French Defence. **Aron Nimzowitsch** believed it to be White’s best choice and enriched its theory with many ideas. However, the Advance declined

in popularity throughout most of the 20th century until it was revived in the 1980s by GM and prominent opening theoretician **Evgeny Sveshnikov**, who continues to be a leading expert in this line. In recent years, it has become nearly as popular as 3.Nd2; GM **Alexander Grischuk** has championed it successfully at the highest levels. It is also a popular choice at the club level due to the availability of a simple, straightforward plan involving attacking chances and extra space.

### 5.15.7 ECO codes

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* includes an alphanumeric classification system for openings that is widely used in chess literature. Codes C00 to C19 are the French Defence, broken up in the following way (all apart from C00 start with the moves 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5):

- C00 – 1.e4 e6 without 2.d4, or 2.d4 without 2...d5 (early deviations)
- C01 – 2.d4 d5 (includes the Exchange Variation, 3.exd5)
- C02 – 3.e5 (Advance Variation)
- C03 – 3.Nd2 (includes 3...Be7; C03–C09 cover the Tarrasch Variation)
- C04 – 3.Nd2 Nc6 (Guimard Variation)
- C05 – 3.Nd2 Nf6
- C06 – 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3
- C07 – 3.Nd2 c5 (includes 4.exd5 Qxd5)
- C08 – 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5
- C09 – 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Ngf3 Nc6
- C10 – 3.Nc3 (includes the Rubinstein Variation, 3...dxe4)
- C11 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 (includes the Steinitz Variation, 4.e5; C11–C14 cover the Classical Variation)
- C12 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 (includes the McCutcheon Variation, 4...Bb4)
- C13 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 dxe4 (Burn Variation)
- C14 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7
- C15 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 (C15–C19 cover the Winawer Variation)
- C16 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5
- C17 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5
- C18 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 (includes the Armenian Variation, 5...Ba5)
- C19 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Nf3 and 7.a4

### 5.15.8 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 5.15.9 References

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- [2] Although many sources refer to John Lindsay McCutcheon and his eponymous variation as “MacCutcheon”, “McCutcheon” is the correct spelling. **Jeremy Gaige**, *Chess Personalities*, McFarland & Company, 1987, pp. 260, 275. ISBN 0-7864-2353-6; **David Hooper** and **Kenneth Whyld**, *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed. 1992), Oxford University Press, p. 240, p. 478 n. 1205. ISBN 0-19-866164-9.
- [3] Steinitz–McCutcheon, New York simul 1885
- [4] <http://chesstempo.com/gamedb/opening/688>
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- [6] <http://chesstempo.com/gamedb/game/2183872/rnbqkbnr/pppp1ppp/4p3/1B6/4P3/8/PPPP1PPP/RNBQK1NR%20b%20KQkq%20-%201%202>
- [7] Le Palamède edited by St. Amant (1846), p. 20.
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- [9] p369, **Howard Staunton**, *The Chess-Player’s Handbook*, 1847, H.G.Bohn.

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### 5.15.10 Further reading

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- Tzermiadianos, Andreas (2008). *How to Beat the French Defence: The Essential Guide to the Tarrasch*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 9781857445671.
- Vitiugov, Nikita (2010). *The French Defence*. Chess Stars. ISBN 978-954-8782-76-0.
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### 5.15.11 External links

- The Anatomy of the French Advance

## 5.16 Caro-Kann Defence

The **Caro–Kann Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. e4 c6

The Caro–Kann is a common defense against the King's Pawn Opening and is classified as a "Semi-Open Game" like the Sicilian Defence and French Defence, although it is thought to be more solid and less dynamic than either of those openings. It often leads to good endgames for Black, who has the better pawn structure.

### 5.16.1 History

Final position after 17...Rc1

The opening is named after the English player Horatio Caro and the Austrian player Marcus Kann who analysed it in 1886. Kann scored an impressive 17-move victory with the Caro–Kann Defence against German-British chess champion Jacques Mieses at the 4th German Chess Congress in Hamburg in May 1885:

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Bd3 Bxd3 5.Qxd3 e6 6.f4 c5 7.c3 Nc6 8.Nf3 Qb6 9.0-0 Nh6 10.b3 cxd4 11.cxd4 Nf5 12.Bb2 Rc8 13.a3 Ncxd4 14.Nxd4 Bc5 15.Rd1 Nxd4 16.Bxd4 Bxd4+ 17.Qxd4 Rc1 0–1<sup>[1]</sup>

### 5.16.2 Main line: 2.d4 d5

After 2. d4 d5 the most common moves are 3.Nc3 (Classical and Modern variations), 3.Nd2 (usually transposing into 3.Nc3), 3.exd5 (Exchange Variation), and 3.e5 (Advance Variation).

#### 3.Nc3 and 3.Nd2

3.Nc3 and 3.Nd2 usually transpose into each other after 3...dxe4 4.Nxe4. Since the 1970's, 3.Nd2 has increased in popularity to avoid the Gurgenzidze Variation (3.Nc3 g6), however some players choose to allow it.

**Classical Variation: 3...dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5** Classical / Capablanca Variation after 4.Bf5

The most common way of handling the Caro–Kann, the Classical Variation (often referred to as the Capablanca Variation after José Capablanca), is defined by the moves:

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 (or 3.Nd2) dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5

This was long considered to represent best play for both sides in the Caro–Kann. White usually continues:

5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.h5 Bh7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3

Although White's pawn on h5 looks ready to attack, it can prove to be a weakness in an endgame.<sup>[2]</sup>

Much of the Caro–Kann's reputation as a solid defence stems from this variation. Black makes very few compromises in pawn structure and plays a timely c6–c5 to contest the d4-square. Variations with Black castling queenside gave the Caro–Kann its reputation of being solid but somewhat boring. More popular recently are variations with Black castling kingside and even leaving his king in the centre. These variations can be sharp and dynamic.

Here is a brilliancy illustrating White's attacking chances when the players castle on opposite sides in the Classical Variation:

Lev Milman–Joseph Fang, Foxwoods Open, 2005[2]

**1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Bf5 5. Ng3 Bg6 6. h4 h6 7. Nf3 Nd7 8. h5 Bh7 9. Bd3 Bxd3 10. Qxd3 e6** (10...Qc7 avoids White's next) **11. Bf4 Bb4+ 12. c3 Be7 13. 0-0-0 Ngf6 14. Kb1 0-0 15. Ne5 c5?! (15...Qa5 is usual and better) 16. Qf3 Qb6?** (necessary was 16...cxd4 17.Rxd4 Nxe5 18.Bxe5 Qc8 19.Rhd1 Rd8 20.Ne4 with a small White advantage) **17. Nxd7 Nxd7 18. d5 exd5 19. Nf5! Bf6 20. Rxd5 Qe6 21. Bxh6 Ne5** (21...gxh6 22.Rd6 Qe8 23.Rxf6 Nxf6 24.Qg3+ mates on g7) **22. Qe4 Nc6 23. Qf3 Ne5?** (23...gxh6 24.Rd6 Qe5 25.Nxh6+ Kg7 26.Nf5+ Kh7 with an unclear position) **24. Qe4 Nc6 25. Qg4! Qxd5** (25...Ne5 26.Rxe5 Qxe5 27.Bxg7 Bxg7 28.h6 wins) **26. Bxg7 Qd3+ 27. Ka1 Ne5 28. Ne7+!! Kh7 29. Qg6+!! fxe6 30. hxe6+ Kxe7 31. Rh7#** (White is down a queen, a rook, and a bishop!)[3][4]

**Modern Variation: 3...dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7** Modern Variation after 4...Nd7

Another solid positional line, this variation is characterised by the moves:

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 (or 3.Nd2) dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7

At one time named after the first world champion **Wilhelm Steinitz**, nowadays the variation is variously referred to as the Smyslov Variation after the seventh world champion **Vasily Smyslov** who played a number of notable games with it, the Karpov Variation, after the twelfth World Champion **Anatoly Karpov**, in whose repertoire it appeared quite often, or, most commonly, the Modern Variation. The short-term goal of 4...Nd7 is to ease development by the early exchange of a pair of Knights without compromising the structural integrity of his position. Play is similar to the Classical Variation except that Black has more freedom by delaying the development of his bishop, and is not forced to play it to the g6 square. However, this freedom comes at a cost as White enjoys added freedom in taking up space in the center, and often plays the aggressive 5.Ng5!? where Black's development is brought into question as well as the positional weakness of the f7-square. The famous **last game** of the **Deep Blue** versus **Garry Kasparov** rematch where Kasparov committed a known **blunder** and lost was played in this very line.

Specialist knowledge is a must to play this opening. Otherwise Black could fall prey to early attacks such as the quick

mating trap for White 5.Qe2 and then 6.Nd6#.

**3...dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+** Starting point after 4...Nf6

The Bronstein–Larsen Variation and Korchnoi Variation both begin with the following moves:

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 **Nf6!? 5.Nxf6+**

**Bronstein–Larsen Variation: 5...gxf6** Bronstein–Larsen Variation (5...gxf6!?)

The Bronstein–Larsen Variation arises after:

5...gxf6!?

Black has voluntarily opted for an inferior pawn structure and a practical necessity of castling queenside, while gaining dynamic **compensation** in the form of the open g-file for the rook and unusually active play for the Caro–Kann. It is generally considered somewhat unsound, though world championship challenger **David Bronstein** and former world championship candidate **Bent Larsen** employed it with some success.

**Korchnoi Variation: 5...exf6** Korchnoi Variation (5...exf6)

The Korchnoi Variation arises after:

5...exf6

**Viktor Korchnoi** has played 5...exf6 many times (including his first **world championship** match with **Anatoly Karpov**), and this line has also been employed by **Ulf Andersson**. Black's 5...exf6 is regarded as sounder than 5...gxf6!? of the Bronstein–Larsen Variation and offers Black rapid development, though also ceding White the superior pawn structure and long-term prospects (Black has to be cautious that the d pawn is now a potential passed pawn in the endgame).

**Gurgenidze Variation: 3.Nc3 g6** The Gurgenidze Variation is 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 g6. Black prepares to **fianchetto** the bishop on g7, creating pressure against White's d4 pawn. After 4.Nf3 Bg7 White usually plays 5.h3 to prevent the ...Bg4 pin. This variation, originated by

**Bukhuti Gurgeni** led to a rise in the popularity of 3.Nd2 during the 1970s. After 3.Nd2, 3...g6 is met by 4.c3, when the fianchettoed bishop has little to do. 3.Nd2 will usually transpose into the classical variation after 3...dxe4 4.Nxe4.

### Advance Variation: 3.e5

Advance Variation with 3...Bf5

The 3...Bf5 variation that follows with:

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 **Bf5**

has gained popularity after having previously been widely regarded as inferior for many years, owing chiefly to the strategic demolition that **Aron Nimzowitsch** (playing as White) suffered at the hands of **José Capablanca** in one of their games at the New York 1927 tournament.<sup>[5]</sup>

The Advance Variation has since been revitalized by aggressive lines such as the Bayonet Attack (4.Nc3 e6 5.g4), a popular line in the 1980s and later favoured by Latvian Grandmaster **Alexei Shirov**, or the less ambitious variation 4.Nf3 e6 5.Be2 c5 6.Be3, popularised by English Grandmaster **Nigel Short** and often seen in the 1990s.

Advance variation with 3...c5

The 3...c5 variation that follows with:

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 **c5!?**

is an important alternative and avoids the weight of theory associated with 3...Bf5. It was used by **Mikhail Botvinnik** in his 1961 match versus **Mikhail Tal** (though with a negative outcome for Botvinnik – two draws and a loss). The line was christened the “Arkell/Khenkin Variation” in the leading chess magazine *New in Chess* yearbook 42 in recognition of the work these two Grandmasters did and the success they were having with the variation. In comparison to the French Defence, Black lacks the tempo normally spent on ...e6. However, White can only exploit this by the weakening of his own central bind with 4. dxc5 when Black has good chances of regaining the pawn.

### Exchange Variation: 3.exd5 cxd5

Exchange Variation

The Exchange Variation is 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 **3.exd5** cxd5.

**Main line: 4.Bd3** Exchange Variation 4.Bd3

The “true” Exchange Variation begins with **4.Bd3** (to prevent ...Bf5 while still developing) Nc6 5.c3 Nf6 6.Bf4 Bg4 7.Qb3. This line is considered to offer equal chances, and was tried by **Bobby Fischer**. Some of the strategic ideas are analogous to the **Queen’s Gambit Declined**, Exchange Variation, (1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5) with colours reversed.

**Panov–Botvinnik Attack: 4.c4** Panov–Botvinnik Attack

The Panov–Botvinnik Attack begins with the move **4.c4**. It is named after **Vasily Panov** and the world champion **Mikhail Botvinnik**. This system often leads to typical **isolated queen’s pawn (IQP)** positions, with White obtaining rapid development, a grip on e5, and kingside attacking chances to compensate for the long-term structural weakness of the **isolated d4-pawn**. The major variation in this line is 4...Nf6 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nf3, when Black’s main alternatives are 6...Bb4 (a position often transposing into lines of the **Nimzo-Indian Defence**) and 6...Be7, once the most common line. 6...Nc6?! is inferior as it is favourably met by 7.c5!, after which White plans on seizing the e5-square by advancing the b-pawn to b5, or by exchanging the black knight on c6 after Bb5.

### 5.16.3 Two Knights Variation: 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3

Two Knights Variation

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 (or 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3), played by **Bobby Fischer** in his youth, where White’s intention is to benefit from rapid development as well as to retain options regarding the d-pawn. This approach may be played by white players content with a draw but is not considered theoretically challenging for black, who should equalize with correct play. Black’s logical and probably best reply is 3...Bg4. After 4.h3 Bxf3 5.Qxf3, the positional continuation, Black has the option of 5...Nf6 or 5...e6. This variation sets a trap: if Black plays along the lines of the Classical Variation, he gets in trouble after 3...dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 (4...Nd7 is playable) 5.Ng3 Bg6?! (5...Bg4) 6.h4 h6 7.Ne5 Bh7 (7...Qd6 may be best) 8.Qh5! g6 (forced) 9.Bc4! e6 (9...gxh5?? 10.Bxf7#) 10.Qe2 with a huge advantage for White. Now 10...Qe7! is best. Instead, **Lasker-Radsheer**, 1908 and **Alekhine-Bruce**, 1938 ended quickly after, respectively, 10...Bg7?? 11.Nxf7! and 10...Nf6?? 11.Nxf7!<sup>[6][7]</sup> 4...Bh5 is a complex line, in which White can

trap the bishop, though Black gains tremendous compensation.

### 5.16.4 Other lines

White can play 2.c4. Then Black may play 2...d5 (see 1.e4 c6 2.c4 d5). This can transpose to the Panov–Botvinnik (B14, given above, with exd5 cxd5 d4) or Caro–Kann (B10, with the double capture on d5). Or Black may play 2...e5 (see 1.e4 c6 2.c4 e5). The 2.c4 line sometimes arises by transposition from the **English Opening**: 1.c4 c6 2.e4.

**Fantasy or Tartakower Variation:** 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.f3, which somewhat resembles the **Blackmar–Diemer Gambit**. 3...e6 is probably the most solid response, preparing to exploit the dark squares via ...c5, though 3...g6 has been tried by Yasser Seirawan. GM Lars Schandorff and GM Sam Shankland both prefer 3...dxe4 4.fxe4 e5 5.Nf3 Bg4 6.Bc4 Nd7 7.0-0 Ngf6 8.c3 Bd6 with play being sharp and double-edged. Interesting, though probably insufficient is 3...e5. This so-called 'Twisted Fantasy Variation' aims to exploit white's weaknesses on the a7–g1 diagonal. An idea which is similar to 3...Qb6, a variation championed by Baadur Jobava. Related to the Fantasy Variation are the gambits 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.f3, originated by Sir Stuart Milner-Barry, and 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Bc4 Nf6 5.f3 by (von Hennig).

**Hillbilly Attack:** 1.e4 c6 2.Bc4?! This is most often played by club players who are unfamiliar with the Caro–Kann Defence. If 2...d5 3. exd5 cxd5, Black has simply gained a tempo on the bishop. Nevertheless GM Simon Williams has experimented with this move, following it up by gambiting the pawn with 2...d5 3.Bb3!<sup>[8]</sup>

**The Dunst Attack** The **Dunst Opening**, 1.Nc3, has many transpositional possibilities, and one of them involves the Caro–Kann. After the moves 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Qf3!?, White's position is sound according to Graham Burgess.<sup>[9]</sup>

### 5.16.5 ECO codes

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) has ten codes for the Caro–Kann Defence, B10 through B19:

- **B10** - Miscellaneous 2nd moves by White

- Hillbilly Attack: 1.e4 c6 2.Bc4
- Modern; English Variation, Accelerated Panov: 1.e4 c6 2.c4
- Breyer Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d3
- Massachusetts Defense: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 f5
- Masi Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 Nf6

- Scorpion-Horus Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.d3 dxe4 4.Bg5
- Spielmann/Goldman Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Qf3
- Two Knights Variation (without 3...Bg4): 1.e4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3
- Apocalypse Attack: 1.e4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Ne5

- **B11** - Two Knights Variation with 3...Bg4

- Mindeno Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 Bg4
- Retreat Line, Mindeno Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.h3 Bh5

- **B12** - Miscellaneous lines with 2.d4

- Landau Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Bd3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 6.e6
- Mieses Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Be3
- Diemer–Duhm Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.c4
- Advance Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5
- Prins Attack: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.b4
- Bayonet Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.g4
- Tal Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.h4
- Van der Wiel Attack: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nc3
- Dreyev Defense: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nc3 Qb6
- Bronstein Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Ne2
- Short Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nf3 e6 5.Be2
- Botvinnik–Carls Defense: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5
- Maroczy Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.f3
- Fantasy/Lilienfisch Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.f3
- Maroczy Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.f3 dxe4 4.fxe4 e5 5.Nf3 exd4 6.Bc4
- Modern Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2
- New Caro–Kann 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 g6
- Edinburgh Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Qb6
- Ulysses Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nf3 dxe4 4.Ng5
- De Bruycker Defense: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 Na6

- Hector Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 dxe4 4.Ng5
- **B13** - Exchange Variation
  - Rubinstein Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Nf6 6.Bf4
  - Panov–Botvinnik: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4
  - Panov–Botvinnik, Gedult-Gunderam Attack: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 Nf6 5.c5
- **B14** - Panov-Botvinnik Attack with 5...e6
  - Carlsbad Line: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bg5 e6
  - Czerniak Line: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bg5 Qa5
  - Reifir–Spielmann Line: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bg5 Qb6
- **B15** - 3.Nc3, miscellaneous lines
  - Gurenidze Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 b5
  - Von Hennig Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Bc4
  - Milner–Barry Gambit, Rasa-Studier Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.f3
  - Knight Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6
  - Tarrasch/Alekhine Gambit: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Bd3
  - Tartakower Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+ exf6
  - Forgacs Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+ exf6 6.Bc4
  - Gurenidze System: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 g6
  - Gurenidze Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 g6 4.e5 Bg7 5.f4 h5
  - Campomanes Attack: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6
- **B16** - Bronstein-Larsen Variation
  - Finnish Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 h6
  - Bronstein–Larsen Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+ gxf6
  - Korchnoi Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+ exf6
- **B17** - Steinitz Variation
  - Karpov Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7
  - Smyslov Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Bc4 Ngf6 6.Ng5 e6 7.Qe2 Nb6
  - Tiviakov–Fischer Attack: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Bc4 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6
  - Kasparov Attack: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Ng3
  - Ivanchuk Defense: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Ng5 Ndf6
- **B18** - Classical Variation
  - Classical Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5
  - Flohr Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.Nh3
- **B19** - Classical Variation with 7...Nd7
  - Spassky Variation: 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.h5 Bh7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3

### 5.16.6 See also

- [List of chess openings](#)
- [List of chess openings named after people](#)

### 5.16.7 References

- [1] [Jacques Mieses vs Marcus Kann](#)
- [2] [Schiller](#), p. 33
- [3] Notes based on Milman's much more extensive notes in [Chess Life](#), July 2005, pp. 11–12.
- [4] [Milman-Fang](#), 7th Foxwoods Open 2005. [Chess-Games.com](#). Retrieved on 2009-10-30.
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- [6] [Lasker-Radsheer](#), simultaneous exhibition 1908. [Chess-Games.com](#). Retrieved on 2009-04-14.
- [7] [Alekhine-R. Bruce](#), Plymouth 1938. [ChessGames.com](#). Retrieved on 2009-04-14.
- [8] [Simon Kim Williams vs Gawain Jones](#), 4NCL 2011 at [chess-games.com](#)
- [9] [The Dunst](#): Attacking the Caro-Kann with an early Queen sortie

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## 5.17 Pirc Defence

The **Pirc Defence** (correctly pronounced “peerts”, but often mispronounced “perk”), sometimes known as the **Ufimsev Defence** or **Yugoslav Defence**, is a chess opening characterised by Black responding to 1.e4 with 1...d6 and 2...Nf6, followed by ...g6 and ...Bg7, while allowing White to establish an impressive-looking centre with pawns on d4 and e4. It is named after the Slovenian Grandmaster Vasja Pirc.

### 5.17.1 General remarks

The Pirc Defence is a relatively new opening; while it was seen on occasion in the late nineteenth century, it was considered **irregular**, thus remaining a sideline. The opening began gaining some popularity only after **World War II**, and by the 1960s it was regarded as playable, owing in large part

to the efforts of Canadian Grandmaster **Duncan Suttles**. Black, in **hypermodern** fashion, does not immediately stake a claim in the **centre** with **pawns**; rather, Black works to undermine White’s centre from the flanks. Its first appearance in a **World Championship** match was in 1972, when it was played by **Bobby Fischer** against **Boris Spassky** at Reykjavík (game 17); the game ended in a draw.

Pirc Defence normally refers to the opening moves **1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 g6**. This is the most commonly played line after Black responds to 1.e4 with 1...d6.<sup>[1]</sup> It has been claimed to give rise to somewhat interesting and exciting games,<sup>[2]</sup> where Black will have counterplay but has to be cautious about playing too passively.<sup>[3]</sup> According to **Garry Kasparov**, the Pirc Defence is “hardly worth using in the tournaments of the highest category”, as it gives White “too many opportunities for anybody’s liking”.<sup>[4]</sup>

A distinction is usually drawn between the Pirc and lines where Black delays the development of his knight to f6, or omits it altogether; this is known as the **Modern** or **Robatsch Defence**. The tenth edition of *Modern Chess Openings* (1965) grouped the Pirc and Robatsch together as the “Pirc–Robatsch Defense”.

### 5.17.2 Main line: 3...g6

#### Austrian Attack: 4.f4

Main article: Pirc Defence, Austrian Attack

The Austrian Attack begins 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3, and was a favourite of Fischer. It is also well respected by **Nick de Firmian**, the author of *Modern Chess Openings* (MCO). In placing pawns on d4, e4 and f4, White establishes a powerful centre, intending to push in the centre and/or attack on the **kingside**; in the main line, Black will usually counter with e5, aiming for play against the dark squares and weaknesses created by White’s central advance. This direct, aggressive line is one of the most ambitious systems against the Pirc. **Jan Timman** has played the Austrian successfully with both colours. **Yuri Balashov** does well with the White pieces, and **Valery Beim** has an impressive score on the Black side.

**5...0-0** The most frequently played variation after 5...0-0 is the **Weiss Variation**, 6.Bd3, with 6...Nc6 the most common response, though 6...Na6, with the idea of ...Nc7, ...Rb8 and ...b5 was tried in the 1980s after 6...Nc6 was found to offer Black few winning chances. 6.e5 is a sharp try, with unclear consequences, which was much played in the 1960s, though it has never attained popularity at the highest levels. 6.Be2 is another move which was often seen

in the 1950s and early 1960s, although the defeat sustained by Fischer in the game given in the sample games spurred White players, including Fischer, to turn to 6.Bd3. In the 1980s, 6.Be2 c5 7.dxc5 Qa5 8.0-0 Qxc5+ 9.Kh1 was revived. 6.Be3 is another possibility, explored in the 1970s.

**5...c5** Black's chief alternative to 5...0-0 lies in an immediate strike against the White centre with 5...c5, to which the usual response is either 6.dxc5 or 6.Bb5+. The former allows 6...Qa5. The latter promises a tactical melee, with a common line being 6.Bb5+ Bd7 7.e5 Ng4 8.e6 (8.h3 or 8.Bxd7+ are other possibilities) fxe6, which was thought bad, until Yasser Seirawan played the move against Gyula Sax in 1988 (8...Bxb5 is the alternative, if Black does not want the forced draw in the main line) 9.Ng5 Bxb5!

Now if White tries 10.Nxe6, Black has 10...Bxd4!, ignoring the threat to his queen, in view of 11.Nxd8 Bf2+ 12.Kd2 Be3+ with a draw by perpetual check. White can instead try 11.Nxb5, with complicated play.

White can also essay the sharp 6.e5 against 5...c5, after which 6...Nfd7 7.exd6 0-0 is considered to offer good play for Black.

### Classical (Two Knights) System: 4.Nf3

The Classical (Two Knights) System begins 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Be2 0-0 6.0-0. White contents himself with the 'classical' pawn centre with pawns at e4 and d4, forgoing the committal move f2–f4 as Black castles and builds a compact structure. Efim Geller, Anatoly Karpov and Evgeni Vasiukov have all successfully used this system for White; Zurab Azmaiparashvili has scored well as Black. The most common responses for Black are 6...Bg4, 6...c6 or 6...Nc6, with 6...Bg4 the main line from the mid-1960s onwards.

### The 150 and Argentine Attacks

The setup f2–f3, Be3 and Qd2 is commonly used against the King's Indian Defence and Dragon Sicilian, and can also be used against the Pirc; indeed, this system is as old as the Pirc itself.

The system 4.f3 was introduced by Argentine players c. 1930 and again in 1950. It was never considered dangerous for Black because of 4.f3 Bg7 5.Be3 c6 6.Qd2 b5. It received a severe blow in about 1985, when Gennady Zaichik showed that Black could castle anyway and play a dangerous gambit with 5...0-0 6.Qd2 e5.

The Argentines feared the sally ...Ng4, though some British players (especially Mark Hebden, Paul Motwani, Gary

Lane, later also Michael Adams) came to realise that this was mainly dangerous for Black, therefore playing Be3 and Qd2 in all sorts of move orders, whilst omitting f2–f3. They called this the *150 Attack*, because only players of this strength (about ELO 1800) could be naive enough to expect mate in 25 moves.<sup>[5]</sup>

The original Argentine idea probably is only viable after 4.Be3 Bg7 5.Qd2 0-0 6.0-0-0 c6 (or Nc6) 7.f3 b5 8.h4. Black usually does not castle though and prefers 5...c6 or even 4...c6. The question of whether and when to insert Nf3 remains unclear.

### Other systems

4.Bg5 was introduced by Robert Byrne in the 1960s, after which Black has often played the natural 4...Bg7, though 4...c6 is considered more flexible, as Black may wish to save a tempo in anticipation of White's plan of Qd2, followed by Bh6, by deferring Bg7 as long as possible, playing for queenside activity with b7–b5 and Qa5. White's idea of Qd2 and Bh6 may give a transposition to the lines with Be3 and Qd2. A less common method of playing this system is 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bg5.

4.Bc4 Bg7 5.Qe2 is a sharp try for advantage; 5...Nc6 can lead to hair-raising complications after 6.e5, when Black's best line may be 6...Ng4 7.e6 Nxd4 8.Qxg4 Nxc2+, avoiding the more frequently played 6...Nxd4 7.exf6 Nxe2 8.fxg7 Rg8 9.Ngxe2 Rxg7, which has been generally considered to lead to an equal or unclear position, though White has scored heavily in practice. Another possibility for Black is 5...c6, though 6.e5 dxe5 7.dxe5 Nd5 8.Bd2, followed by long castling, gives White the advantage, as Black's position is cramped and he lacks active counterplay. 6...Nd7 is now considered fine for Black, in view of 7.e6?! fxe6 8.Qxe6 Nde5! 9.Qd5 e6 with advantage to Black. If White instead plays the better 7.Nf3, Black has multiple solid choices, including 0-0 and Nb6 (followed by Na5), which is considered to equalise.

4.g3 and 5.Bg2, followed by Nge2, is a solid line, which was sometimes adopted by Karpov.

4.Be3 is another alternative, usually seen at club level. This line is relatively passive and does not provide much scope for White's attack and 4.Bf4 and 4.Bg5 are considered to be stronger lines.

4.Be2 may transpose into the classical variation after 4...Bg7 5.Nf3, or White may try one of two highly aggressive lines, the Bayonet Attack (5.h4) or the Chinese Variation (5.g4).

### 5.17.3 Early deviations

After 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3, Black has an alternative to 3...g6 (Main line) known as the **Pribyl System** or **Czech Defence**, beginning 3...c6. The lines often transpose to the Pirc if Black later plays ...g6; alternatively, Black can play Qa5 and e5 to challenge White's centre, or expand on the queenside with b5.

A common deviation by Black in recent practice is 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5. This has been tried by many GMs over the years, including **Zurab Azmaiparashvili** and **Christian Bauer**. White's 4.dxe5 is known to be equal, and play normally continues 4...dxe5 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 6.Bc4 Be6 7.Bxe6 fxe6. Instead, White normally transposes to the **Philidor Defence** with 4.Nf3.

An unusual but quite reasonable deviation for White is 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.f3. At the 1989 **Barcelona** World Cup event, former world champion **Garry Kasparov** surprised American Grandmaster **Yasser Seirawan** with this move. After 3...g6 4.c4, an unhappy Seirawan found himself defending the **King's Indian Defence** for the first time in his life,<sup>[6]</sup> though he managed to draw the game. Black can avoid a King's Indian with 3...e5, which may lead to an **Old Indian** type of position after 4.d5, or with 3...d5. This can transpose to the Classical Variation of the **French Defence** after 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 e6 6.Nf3, to the Tarrasch Variation of the French Defence after 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 e6 6.c3 c5 7.Nd2 Nc6 8.Ndf3, or even to the **Blackmar–Diemer Gambit** with an extra tempo for White after 4.Nc3 dxe4 5.Bg5 exf3 6.Nxf3.

### 5.17.4 Sample games

- In the following game, Azmaiparashvili uses the Pirc to defeat reigning world champion Karpov.

#### **Karpov vs. Azmaiparashvili, USSR Championship, Moscow 1983**

1.e4 d6 2.d4 g6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 Bg7 5.Be2 0-0 6.0-0 Bg4 7.Be3 Nc6 8.Qd2 e5 9.d5 Ne7 10.Rad1 b5 11.a3 a5 12.b4 axb4 13.axb4 Ra3 14.Bg5 Rxc3 15.Bxf6 Bxf3 16.Bxf3 Ra3 17.Bxg7 Kxg7 18.Ra1 Qa8 19.Rxa3 Qxa3 20.Be2 Qb2 21.Rd1 f5 22.exf5 Nxf5 23.c3 Qxd2 24.Rxd2 Ra8 25.Bxb5 Ra3 26.Rc2 Ne7 27.f4 exf4 28.Bc6 Nf5 29.Kf2 Ne3 30.Rc1 Kf6 31.g3 Ke5 32.Kf3 g5 33.gxf4+ gxf4 34.h4 Nxd5 35.Bxd5 Kxd5 36.Kxf4 Kc4 37.Re1 Rxc3 38.Re7 Kxb4 39.Rxh7 d5 40.Ke5 c6 41.Kd4 Rc4+ 0-1

- Kasparov's Immortal; Rook and Knight Sacrifice.

#### **Kasparov vs. Veselin Topalov, Wijk aan Zee 1999**

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Be3 Bg7 5.Qd2 c6 6.f3 b5 7.Nge2 Nbd7 8.Bh6 Bxh6 9.Qxh6 Bb7 10.a3 e5 11.0-0-0 Qe7 12.Kb1 a6 13.Nc1 0-0-0 14.Nb3 exd4 15.Rxd4 c5 16.Rd1 Nb6 17.g3 Kb8 18.Na5 Ba8 19.Bh3 d5 20.Qf4+ Ka7 21.Rhe1 d4 22.Nd5 Nbx5 23.exd5 Qd6 24.Rxd4 cxd4 25.Re7+ Kb6 26.Qxd4+ Kxa5 27.b4+ Ka4 28.Qc3 Qxd5 29.Ra7 Bb7 30.Rxb7 Qc4 31.Qxf6 Kxa3 32.Qxa6+ Kxb4 33.c3+ Kxc3 34.Qa1+ Kd2 35.Qb2+ Kd1 36.Bf1 Rd2 37.Rd7 Rxd7 38.Bxc4 bxc4 39.Qxh8 Rd3 40.Qa8 c3 41.Qa4+ Ke1 42.f4 f5 43.Kc1 Rd2 44.Qa7 1-0

- Tal The Magician; Rook Sacrifice.

#### **Mikhail Tal vs. Tigran Petrosian, Moscow 1974**

1.Nf3 g6 2.e4 Bg7 3.d4 d6 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.Be2 0-0 6.0-0 Nc6 7.d5 Nb8 8.Re1 e5 9.dxe6 Bxe6 10.Bf4 h6 11.Nd4 Bd7 12.Qd2 Kh7 13.e5 dxe5 14.Bxe5 Ne4 15.Nxe4 Bxe5 16.Nf3 Bg7 17.Rad1 Qc8 18.Bc4 Be8 19.Neg5+ hxg5 20.Nxg5+ Kg8 21.Qf4 Nd7 22.Rxd7 Bxd7 23.Bxf7+ 1-0

- Candidates Jewel; Bishop Sacrifice.

#### **Fischer vs. Viktor Korchnoi, Curaçao 1962**

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 c5 7.dxc5 Qa5 8.0-0 Qxc5+ 9.Kh1 Nc6 10.Nd2 a5 11.Nb3 Qb6 12.a4 Nb4 13.g4? Bxg4! 14.Bxg4 Nxg4 15.Qxg4 Nxc2 16.Nb5 Nxa1 17.Nxa1 Qc6 18.f5 Qc4 19.Qf3 Qxa4 20.Nc7 Qxa1 21.Nd5 Rae8 22.Bg5 Qxb2 23.Bxe7 Be5 24.Rf2 Qc1+ 25.Rf1 Qh6 26.h3 gxf5 27.Bxf8 Rxf8 28.Ne7+ Kh8 29.Nxf5 Qe6 30.Rg1 a4 31.Rg4 Qb3 32.Qf1 a3 33.Rg3 Qxg3 0-1

- "Cheap's" Sacrifice.

#### **Hikaru Nakamura vs. Ilya Smirin, Foxwoods Open 2005**

1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.f4 Nf6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.e5 Nfd7 7.h4 c5 8.h5 cxd4 9.hxg6 dxc3 10.gxf7+ Rxf7 11.Bc4 Nf8 12.Ng5 e6 13.Nxf7 cxb2 14.Bxb2 Qa5+ 15.Kf1 Kxf7 16.Qh5+ Kg8 17.Bd3 Qb4 18.Rb1 Bd7 19.c4 Qd2 20.Bxh7+ Nxh7 21.Qxh7+ Kf8 22.Rh4 1-0

### 5.17.5 ECO codes

Some of the systems employed by White against the Pirc Defence include the following:

- 4.Bc4 (ECO B07) Kholmov System (4.Bc4 Bg7 5.Qe2)
- 4.Be2 (ECO B07) sub-variants after 4.Be2 Bg7 include the Chinese Variation, 5.g4 and the Bayonet (Mariotti) Attack, 5.h4
- 4.Be3 (ECO B07) 150 or “Caveman” Attack (4.Be3 c6 5.Qd2)
- 4.Bg5 (ECO B07) Byrne Variation
- 4.g3 (ECO B07) Sveshnikov System
- 4.Nf3 (ECO B08) Classical (Two Knights) System (sub-variants after 4...Bg7 include 5.h3 and 5.Be2)
- 4.f4 (ECO B09) Austrian Attack (sub-variants after 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 include 6.e5, 6.Be2, 6.Bd3 and 6.Be3; also, after 4...Bg7 is 5.Bc4, the Ljubojevic Variation; Black also has the option to move into the Dragon Formation after 5.Nf3 with 5...c5)

### 5.17.6 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 5.17.7 References

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- [2] <http://www.chess.com/article/view/openings-for-tactical-players-pirc-defense>
- [3] <http://www.thechesswebsite.com/pirc-defense/>
- [4] Garry Kasparov. “Tournament in Wijk aan Zee (annotated by G. Kasparov)”. *gameknot.com*. Retrieved 2014-05-31.
- [5] Richard Palliser gives a different reason on page 249 of *Starting Out: d-pawn Attacks*: “[...] named because White’s position is supposed to be so easy to play that a reasonable club player (150 British rating corresponds to an Elo of 1800) can obtain a good position with it against even a grandmaster!” Sam Collins on page 110 of *Understanding the Chess Opening* says it is so named because “even a 150-rated player can handle the white side.”
- [6] <http://www.chessgames.com> database for Seirawan games with Black.

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### 5.17.8 Further reading

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- Jacques Le Monnier, *La défense Pirc en 60 parties*, (Paris, Editions Grasset/Europe Echecs, 1983 for the first edition), ISBN 2-246-28571-2
- Gallagher, Joe (2003), *Starting Out: The Pirc/Modern*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 1-85744-336-5

## 5.18 Pirc Defence, Austrian Attack

The **Austrian Attack** variation of the **Pirc Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the following moves:

1. e4 d6
2. d4 Nf6
3. Nc3 g6
4. f4 Bg7

Typical continuations include the **main line** 5.Nf3 0-0, an immediate kingside attack with 5.e5 Nfd7, or a queenside counterattack with 5.Nf3 c5.

The Pirc Defence is one of several **hypermodern** responses to the opening move 1.e4. The aim of the Austrian Attack is to take advantage of Black’s hypermodern approach by establishing a broad pawn centre early in the game. The general strategy for White is to use the pawn on f4 to support a breakthrough with e4–e5.<sup>[1]</sup> Black will often castle early and attempt to find counterplay with c7–c5, or in some cases, e7–e5,<sup>[2]</sup> or the development of the queenside knight.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 5.18.1 Performance

The [Chessgames.com](http://www.chessgames.com) master game database records approximately 1850 games which opened with the Austrian

Attack. Of those games, White won 39.4%, Black won 28%, and the remaining 32.6% were draws.<sup>[4]</sup> Siegbert Tarrasch successfully employed the Austrian Attack against Rudolf Charousek in 1896, securing a win in just 17 moves.<sup>[5]</sup> Edward Lasker unsuccessfully used the opening against Miguel Najdorf, resigning after 42 moves.<sup>[6]</sup> In 1952, Isaac Boleslavsky tried the opening against Vasja Pirc (after whom the Pirc Defence is named), but they agreed to a draw after move 62.<sup>[7]</sup>

In the 17th game of the 1972 World Chess Championship, Boris Spassky opened with 1.e4. Bobby Fischer responded with the Pirc Defence, for the only time in his career.<sup>[8]</sup> Spassky played the Austrian Attack. The game proceeded as follows:

1.e4 d6 2.d4 g6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3  
c5 6.dxc5 Qa5 7.Bd3 Qxc5 8.Qe2 0-0 9.Be3  
Qa5 10.0-0 Bg4 11.Rad1 Nc6 12.Bc4 Nh5  
13.Bb3 Bxc3 14.bxc3 Qxc3 15.f5 Nf6 16.h3  
Bxf3 17.Qxf3 Na5 18.Rd3 Qc7 19.Bh6 Nxb3  
20.cxb3 Qc5+ 21.Kh1 (see diagram) Qe5

By playing 21...Qe5 instead of 21...Rf8–c8, Fischer offered the exchange sacrifice as a means of blunting Spassky's kingside attack. The game ended on move 45 owing to draw by agreement despite Spassky having a slight material advantage.<sup>[8][9]</sup>

## 5.18.2 References

### Notes

- [1] Botterill 1973, p. 3
- [2] Botterill 1973, p. 39
- [3] Botterill 1973, p. 54
- [4] Chess Opening Explorer on Chessgames.com
- [5] Siegbert Tarrasch vs Rudolf Rezso Charousek on Chessgames.com
- [6] Edward Lasker vs Miguel Najdorf on Chessgames.com
- [7] Isaac Boleslavsky vs Vasja Pirc on Chessgames.com
- [8] Botterill 1973, p. 118
- [9] Boris Spassky vs Robert James Fischer on Chessgames.com

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- Botterill, G. S. and Keene, R. D. (1973). Wade, R. G., ed. *The Pirc Defence*. London: B. T. Batsford. ISBN 0-7134-0361-6.

## 5.19 Balogh Defense

The **Balogh Defense** (also known as the **Balogh Counter Gambit**) is an unusual chess opening beginning with the moves:

1. e4 d6
2. d4 f5

It may also arise by transposition from the Staunton Gambit against the Dutch Defense, 1.d4 f5 2.e4!?, if Black declines the gambit with 2...d6.

The defense is named for János Balogh (1892–1980), who was a Hungarian International Master of correspondence chess, and a strong master at over-the-board chess. The opening is rarely seen today because it weakens Black's kingside somewhat and often results in a backward e-pawn and/or a hole on e6 after Black's light-square bishop is exchanged. International Correspondence Chess Master Keith Hayward has recently written a series of articles arguing that the defense, though risky, is playable.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 5.19.1 Illustrative games

- The following game shows U.S. Champion Hikaru Nakamura using the Balogh Defense to beat a grandmaster:

Perelshteyn (2579)–Nakamura (2662), HB Global Chess Challenge 2005

1.e4 d6 2.d4 f5 3.exf5 Bxf5 4.Bd3 Qd7 5.Qf3  
Bxd3 6.Qxd3 e6 7.Nf3 Nc6 8.0-0 0-0-0 9.c4  
Nf6 10.Nc3 d5!? 11.c5 h6 12.b4! g5 13.b5  
Na5! 14.Re1 Re8 15.Bd2 Nc4 16.Ne5 Qh7  
17.Qe2 Nxe5 18.dxe5 Nd7 19.c6 Nb6 20.cxb7+  
Kxb7 21.Be3 Bb4 22.Qb2?! Ba5! 23.Bd4  
Nc4 24.Qe2 Rhf8 25.Red1 Bb6 26.Na4 Rf4  
27.Nc5+ Kc8 28.Nb3 Qe4 29.Qxe4 Rxe4 30.a4  
Bxd4 31.Nxd4 Nxe5 32.f3 Rf4 33.Ra2 Nc4  
34.Nc6 a5 35.Re2 Rff8 36.Kf2 g4 37.Rd4 gxf3  
38.gxf3 Kb7 39.Rxc4 dxc4 40.Nxa5+ Kb6  
41.Nxc4+ Kc5 42.Ne5 Rf5 43.Re4 Ra8 44.Ke3  
Rxa4! 45.Rxa4 Rxe5+ 46.Kf4 Rf5+ 47.Ke4  
Kxb5 48.Ra7 Kc6 49.Ra6+ Kd7 50.Ra2 Rd5  
51.Rg2 c5 52.Ra2 Ke7 53.Ra7+ Rd7 54.Ra8  
Rd4+ 55.Ke5 Rd5+ 56.Ke4 Rh5 57.Ra7+  
Kd6 58.Ra6+ Kd7 59.Ra7+ Kc6 60.Ra6+ Kb5  
61.Rxe6 Rxh2 62.Kd3 h5 63.Re8 h4 and Black  
won. 0–1

- Most books, if they mention the Balogh Defense at all, say that it is refuted by 3.exf5 Bxf5 4.Qf3 Qc8 5.Bd3.

Hayward believes that this game shows Black's best line against that variation:

W. Jones–Hayward, correspondence 2000  
 1.e4 d6 2.d4 f5 3.exf5 Bxf5 4.Qf3 Qc8 5.Bd3 Bg4 6.Qf4 g6 7.Nc3 Bh6 8.Qg3 Bg7 9.Nge2 Nf6 10.Bg5 Nc6 11.f3 Bf5 12.Bxf5 Qxf5 13.0–0–0 e6 14.Rhe1 0–0 15.Nf4 Rae8 16.Re2 e5 17.dxe5 Rxe5 18.Rxe5 Qxe5 19.Re1 Qf5 20.Qh4 Re8 21.Rxe8+ Nxe8 22.Ncd5 Qe5 23.c3 a6 24.a3 Qf5 25.Ne3 Qd7 26.Nfd5 Qe6 27.f4 b5 28.f5 gxf5 29.Qf4 Ne5 30.Kb1 h6 31.Bh4 Bf8 32.Qxf5 Qxf5+ 33.Nxf5 c6 34.Nde3 Kf7 35.Bg3 Ke6 36.Kc2 c5 37.Bf4 h5 38.Ng3 Nf6 39.Bg5 Neg4 40.Nxg4 hxg4 41.h4 gxh3 42.gxh3 d5 43.Kd3 Bd6 44.Ne2 Ne4 45.Be3 Kf5 46.b4 c4+ 47.Kd4 Be5+ 48.Kxd5 Nxc3+ 49.Nxc3 Bxc3 50.h4 ½–½

- Hayward believes that the following game shows best play by Black in what he considers the main line:

Hayward–Owens, e-mail 1998

**1. e4 d6 2. d4 f5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Bd3 fxe4** Balogh liked 4...Nc6, but Hayward considers 5.exf5! Nxd4 6.g4 difficult for Black.  
**5. Nxe4 Nxe4 6. Bxe4** An earlier game between these players continued 6.h4 Nxe4 7.Bxe4 d5 8.Bd3 Bg7 9.h5 Qd6 10.Nf3 Nc6 11.hxg6 hxg6 12.Rxh8+ Bxh8 13.Be3 Bg4 14.c3 0-0-0 15.Qa4 Bxf3 16.gxf3 e5 17.dxe5 Nxe5 18.Be2 a6 and Black was fine (0–1, 31). **g6 7. Nf3** Rimlinger–Hayward, correspondence 2000 went 7.Qf3 c6 8.Bg5 Nd7 9.Qe3 Bg7 10.0-0-0 Nf6 11.Bf3 Bf5 12.Ne2 h6 13.Bxf6 Bxf6 14.h4 Qa5 15.Kb1 0-0-0 16.g4 Bd7 17.Nf4 g5 18.Ne6 Bxe6 19.Qxe6+ Kb8 20.hxg5 hxg5 21.c3 d5 22.Rh5 Qc7 23.Rdh1 Rhf8 24.Rh7 Qd6 25.Qe3 e5 26.dxe5 Bxe5 and Black had the superior pawn structure (but ½–½, 54). **d5 8. Bd3 Bg7 9. 0-0 Nc6 10. c3 0-0 11. Bg5 Qd6 12. h3 Bf5 13. Re1 Rae8 14. Re3 e5 15. dxe5 Nxe5 16. Nxe5 Rxe5 17. Rxe5 Bxe5 18. Bh6 Re8 19. Bxf5 gxf5 20. Qh5 Qg6 21. Qxg6+ hxg6 22. Rd1 c6 ½–½**

### 5.19.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 5.19.3 References

- [1] Hayward, Keith R. Balogh Counter Gambit, Part 1 from Chessville.com

### 5.19.4 External links

- Hayward, Keith R. Balogh Counter Gambit, Part 1
- Hayward, Keith R. Balogh Counter Gambit, Part 2: Janos Balogh, the Man and His Games
- Hayward, Keith R. Balogh Counter Gambit, Part 3: White plays an early exf5
- Hayward, Keith R. Balogh Counter Gambit, Part 4: Balogh's Main Line
- Hayward, Keith R. Balogh Counter Gambit, Part 5: Remaining Lines
- Hayward, Keith R. Balogh Counter Gambit, Part 6 (analysis of Perelshteyn–Nakamura)
- Symmetry and chaos: Balogh's Defense. from Chesscafe.com

## 5.20 Scandinavian Defense

The **Scandinavian Defense** (or **Center Counter Defense**) is a chess opening characterized by the moves:

1. e4 d5

The Center Counter Defense is one of the oldest recorded openings, first recorded as being played between Francesc de Castellví and Narcís Vinyoles in Valencia in 1475 in what may be the first recorded game of modern chess, and being mentioned by Lucena in 1497. It is one of the oldest asymmetric defenses to 1.e4, along with the French Defence.

Analysis by Scandinavian masters including Collijn showed it is playable for Black. Although the Center Counter Defense has never enjoyed widespread popularity among top-flight chess players, Joseph Henry Blackburne and Jacques Mieses often played it, and greatly developed its theory in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Alexander Alekhine used it to draw against World Champion Emanuel Lasker at St. Petersburg 1914, and José Raúl Capablanca won twice with it at New York 1915.<sup>[1][2]</sup>

Bent Larsen played it from time to time and defeated World Champion Anatoly Karpov with it at Montreal 1979, spurring a rise in popularity. The popular name also began to switch from “Center Counter Defense” to “Scandinavian

Defense” around this time. Danish player **Curt Hansen** was also considered an expert in the opening.<sup>[3]</sup> Starting in the 1960s, **David Bronstein** and **Nona Gaprindashvili** played it occasionally, and **Ian Rogers** has adopted it frequently starting in the 1980s. In 1995, the Center Counter Defense made a rare appearance in a **World Chess Championship** match, in the 14th game at **New York**. **Viswanathan Anand** as Black obtained an excellent position using the opening against **Garry Kasparov**, although Kasparov won the game.<sup>[4]</sup> During the sixth round of the **2014 Chess Olympiad**, **Magnus Carlsen** chose the Scandinavian against **Fabiano Caruana**.

The opening is classified under code B01 in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO).

### 5.20.1 Main line: 2.exd5

White normally continues 2.exd5 when Black has two major continuations: 2...Qxd5 and 2...Nf6 (Marshall Gambit). The rare move 2...c6 was played successfully by **Joseph Blackburne** on at least one occasion, but is thought to be unsound (after 3.dxc6), and is almost never seen in master-level play.<sup>[5]</sup>

#### 2...Qxd5

**3.Nc3** After 2...Qxd5, the most commonly played move is 3.Nc3 because it attacks the queen with gain of tempo. Against 3.Nc3, Black has a few choices. 3...Qa5 is considered the “classical” line and is currently the most popular option. Another response for Black which has gained popularity since the late 1990s, after being employed by **Grandmasters Sergei Tiviakov** and **Bojan Kurajica** is the more dynamic 3...Qd6, which is called the **Pytel Variation**. Less common alternatives include the retreat 3...Qd8 and 3...Qe5+ (the **Patzer Variation**).

**3...Qa5** Returning to the main line after 3.Nc3 Qa5, White can choose from multiple set-ups. A common line is 4.d4 c6 (or 4...e5) 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.Bc4 Bf5 (6...Bg4 is a different option) 7.Bd2 e6. White has a few options, such as the aggressive 8.Qe2, or the quiet 8.0-0. Black’s pawn structure (pawns on e6 and c6) resemble a **Caro-Kann Defence** structure, therefore many Caro-Kann players wishing to expand their repertoire have adopted this form of the Scandinavian.

Another set-up after 3...Qa5 is to target the b7 pawn by fianchettoing the bishop on the h1–a8 diagonal, instead of placing it on the a2–g8 diagonal, by 4.g3 Nf6 5.Bg2 c6 6.Nf3 followed by 0-0, Rb1, and then exploiting the b7 pawn by b4–b5.

A more speculative approach against 3...Qa5 is the gambit 4.b4?! If Black plays correctly, White should not have sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn, but it can be difficult to prove this over the board.

**3...Qd8** The retreat with 3...Qd8 was depicted in **Castellvi–Vinyoles**, and may be the oldest of all Scandinavian lines. Prior to the 20th century, it was often considered the main line, and was characterized as “best” by **Howard Staunton** in his *Chess-Player’s Handbook*,<sup>[6]</sup> but was gradually superseded by 3...Qa5. In the 1960s, 3...Qd8 experienced something of a revival after the move was played in a game by Bronstein against GM **Andrija Fuderer** in 1959, though Bronstein ultimately lost the game.<sup>[7]</sup> Bronstein’s game featured the older line 4.d4 Nf6, while other grandmasters explored fianchetto systems with 4.d4 g6 and a later Ng8–h6.

However, the line’s reputation suffered after a string of defeats, including two well-known miniatures won by **Bobby Fischer** against **Karl Robatsch** in 1962 (later published in *My 60 Memorable Games*) and **William Addison** in 1970. The variation with 4...g6 “has been under a cloud ever since [Fischer’s] crushing win”,<sup>[8]</sup> but the 3...Qd8 variation as a whole remains playable, though it is now considered somewhat passive.

**3...Qd6** The move 3...Qd6 offers another way to play against 3.Nc3, and it has been growing in popularity in recent years. At first sight the move may look dubious, exposing the queen to a later Nb5 or Bf4, and for many years it was poorly regarded for this reason. However, numerous grandmaster games have since shown 3...Qd6 to be quite playable, and it has been played many times in high-level chess since the mid-1990s. White players against this line have found an effective setup with d4, Nf3, g3, Bg2, 0-0, and a future Ne5 with a strong, active position.

**Other 3rd moves for Black** 3...Qe5+?! (the **Patzer Variation**) is regarded as bad for Black; for example after 4.Be2 c6 5.Nf3 Qc7 6.d4 White has a handy lead in development.

Likewise the rare 3...Qe6+?! is regarded as inferior. One idea is that after the natural interposition 4.Be2, Black plays 4...Qg6 attacking the g2 pawn. However, White will usually sacrifice this pawn by 5.Nf3 Qxg2 6.Rg1 Qh3 7.d4 with a massive lead in development. **David Letterman** played this line as Black in a televised game against **Garry Kasparov**,<sup>[9]</sup> and was checkmated in 23 moves.

**3.d4** Alternatives to 3.Nc3 include 3.d4, which can transpose into a variation of the **Nimzowitsch Defence** after

3...Nc6 (1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 Qxd5), or Black can play 3...e5, as well. After 3...Nc6 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Be2 0-0-0 Black has better development to compensate for White's center after a future c4. Black may also respond to 3.d4 with 3...e5. After the usual 4.dxe5, Black most often plays the pawn sacrifice 4...Qxd1+ 5.Kxd1 Nc6. After White defends the pawn, Black follows up with ...Bg4+ and 0-0-0, e.g. 6.Bb5 Bg4+ 7.f3 0-0-0+ and Black has enough compensation for the pawn, because he is better developed and White's king is stuck in the center. Less popular is 4...Qxe5, since the queen has moved twice in the opening and is in the center of the board, where White can attack it with gain of time (Nf3). However, grandmasters such as Tiviakov have shown that it is not so easy to exploit the centralized queen.

**3.Nf3** Another common response after 2...Qxd5 is the noncommittal 3.Nf3. After 3...Bg4 4.Be2 Nc6, White can transpose to main lines with 5.d4, but has other options, such as 5.0-0.

## 2...Nf6

The other main branch of the Scandinavian Defense is 2...Nf6. The idea is to delay capturing the d5 pawn for another move, avoiding the loss of time that Black incurs in the ...Qxd5 lines after 3.Nc3. Now White has several possibilities:

The **Modern Variation** is 3.d4. Grandmaster **John Emms** calls this the main line of the 2...Nf6 variations, saying that "3.d4 is the common choice for White...and it is easy to see why it is so popular."<sup>[10]</sup> The idea behind the Modern Variation is to give back the pawn in order to achieve quick development. 3...Nxd5 is the most obvious reply. Black wins back the pawn, but White can gain some time by attacking the Knight. White usually responds 4.c4, when the knight must move. The most common responses are a) 4...Nb6, named by Ron Harman and IM **Shaun Taulbut** as the most active option,<sup>[11]</sup> b) 4...Nf6, which Emms calls "slightly unusual, but certainly possible."<sup>[12]</sup> Interestingly, GM **Savielly Tartakower**, an aficionado of unusual openings, discussing Black's options, stated "the soundest is 4...Nf6."<sup>[13]</sup> This is sometimes called the **Marshall Retreat Variation**; c) the tricky **Kiel Variation** (4...Nb4?!), described by Harman and Taulbut as "a speculative try."<sup>[14]</sup> Black is hoping for 5.Qa4+ N8c6 6.d5? b5! with a good game. However, White gets a large advantage after 5.a3 N4c6 6.d5 Ne5 7.Nf3 (or 7.f4 Ng6 8.Bd3 e5 9.Qe2) or 5.Qa4+ N8c6 6.a3!, so the Kiel Variation is seldom seen in practice.<sup>[15]</sup> White may also play 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.c4. Now 5...Nb6 6.c5!? is a sharp line; Black should respond 6...N6d7!, rather than 6...Nd5? 7.Qb3, when Black resigned after 7...b6? 8.Ne5! in Timman–Bakkali, Nice Olympiad 1974, and 7...Bxf3

8.Qxb7! Ne3 9.Qxf3 Nc2+ 10.Kd1 Nxa1 11.Qxa8 also wins for White.<sup>[16][17]</sup>

An important and recently popular alternative to 3...Nxd5 is 3...Bg4!?, the sharp **Portuguese Variation** or **Jadoul Variation**. In this line, Black gives up the d-pawn in order to achieve rapid development and piece activity; the resulting play is often similar to the Icelandic Gambit. The normal continuation is 4.f3 Bf5 5.Bb5+ Nbd7 6.c4. Occasionally seen is 3...g6, the **Richter Variation**, which was played on occasion by IM **Kurt Richter** in the 1930s.<sup>[18]</sup>

Another common response is 3.c4, with which White attempts to retain the extra pawn, at the cost of the inactivity of the light-square bishop. Now Black can play 3...c6, the **Scandinavian Gambit**,<sup>[19]</sup> which is the most common move. The line 4.dxc6? Nxc6, described by Emms as "a miserly pawn grab",<sup>[20]</sup> gives Black too much central control and development. Furthermore, after 4...dxc6 Black can play 4...e5, the **Ross Gambit**,<sup>[21]</sup> which after 5.cxb7 Bxb7 resembles a reversed **Danish Gambit**. Most common after 3...c6 is 4.d4 cxd5, transposing to the Panov–Botvinnik Attack of the **Caro-Kann Defence**. 3...e6!? is the sharp **Icelandic Gambit** or **Palme Gambit**, invented by Icelandic masters who looked for an alternative to the more common 3...c6. Black sacrifices a pawn to achieve rapid development. The most critical line in this double-edged variation is thought to be 4.dxe6 Bxe6 5.Nf3.<sup>[22]</sup>

A third major alternative is 3.Bb5+. The most popular reply is 3...Bd7, though the rarer 3...Nbd7 is gaining more attention recently. After 3.Bb5+ Bd7, White has several options. The most obvious is 4.Bxd7+, after which White can play to keep the extra pawn with 4...Qxd7 5.c4. The historical main line is 4.Bc4, which can lead to very sharp play after 4...Bg4 5.f3 Bf5 6.Nc3, or 4...b5 5.Bb3 a5. Finally, 4.Be2 has recently become more popular, attempting to exploit the misplaced Bishop on d7 after 4...Nxd5.

White's 3.Nf3 is a flexible move that, depending on Black's reply, can transpose into lines with ...Nxd5 or ...Qxd5.

White's 3.Nc3 transposes into a line of **Alekhine's Defence**, normally seen after 1.e4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.exd5, and generally thought to be equal.<sup>[23]</sup> After 3...Nxd5 4.Bc4, the most common reply is 4...Nb6, although 4...Nxc3, 4...c6, and 4...e6 are also viable continuations.

## 5.20.2 Alternatives to 2.exd5

There are several ways for White to avoid the main lines of the Scandinavian Defense. One option is to defer or avoid the exchange of e-pawn for d-pawn. This is most often done by 2.Nc3, which transposes into the **Dunst Opening** after 2...d4 or 2...dxe4. If instead 2.e5?! is played, Black can play 2...c5, develop the Queen's bishop, and play e6, reach-

ing a favorable **French Defense** setup, since here unlike in the standard French Black's light-squared bishop is not shut in on c8. This line can also be compared to the Caro–Kann variation 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5!?!; since in the Scandinavian line Black has played c5 in one rather than two moves, he has a comfortable position.<sup>[24]</sup>

White can also gambit the e-pawn, most frequently by 2.d4, transposing into the **Blackmar-Diemer Gambit**. Other gambits such as 2.Nf3?! (the **Tennison Gambit**) are seldom seen.

In general, none of these sidelines are believed to offer White more than equality, and the overwhelming majority of masters opt for 2.exd5 when facing the Scandinavian.<sup>[24][25]</sup> The Scandinavian is thus arguably Black's most “forcing” defense to 1.e4, restricting White to a relatively small number of options. This has helped to make the Scandinavian Defense fairly popular among club-level players, though it is rare at the **Grandmaster** level.

### 5.20.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 5.20.4 References

- [1] Plaskett, James (2004). *The Scandinavian Defence*. London: Batsford. pp. 118–21. ISBN 0-7134-8911-1.
- [2] Grefe, John and Silman, Jeremy (1983). *Center Counter*. Coraopolis, Pennsylvania: Chess Enterprises, Inc. p. 72. ISBN 0-931462-22-3.
- [3] “Curt Hansen”. ChessBase GmbH. Retrieved 15 December 2013.
- [4] Kasparov–Anand 1995
- [5] Harman, Ron, and Taulbut, Shaun (1993). *Winning with the Scandinavian*. New York: Henry Holt. p. 28. ISBN 0-8050-2935-4.
- [6] Staunton, Howard (1864). “The chess-player's handbook: A popular and scientific introduction to the game of chess”. London: Henry G. Bohn: 377.
- [7] Harman and Taulbut, p.68
- [8] Emms, John (2004). *The Scandinavian, 2nd ed.* London: Everyman Chess. p. 97. ISBN 1-85744-375-6.
- [9] “Garry Kasparov vs David Letterman (1990)”.
- [10] Emms, p. 110.
- [11] Harman and Taulbut, p. 127

- [12] Emms, p. 111.
- [13] “500 Master Games of Chess”, by Savielly Tartakower and Julius du Mont, G. Bell & Sons, London, 1952, p. 413
- [14] Harman and Taulbut, p. 125
- [15] Grefe and Silman, pp. 73–74.
- [16] Plaskett, p. 119.
- [17] Grefe and Silman, p. 78.
- [18] Harman and Taulbut, p. 119.
- [19] <http://www.365chess.com/opening.php?m=7&n=866&ms=e4.d5.exd5.Nf6.c4.c6&ns=3.20.27.45.729.866>
- [20] Emms, p. 155.
- [21] <http://faithsaves.net/scandinavian-marshall-ross-gambit/>
- [22] Emms, p. 174.
- [23] Emms, p. 129.
- [24] Emms, p. 88
- [25] “Chessgames.com Chess Opening Explorer (statistics after 1.e4 d5)”.

### 5.20.5 Further reading

- Melts, Michael (2002). *Scandinavian Defense: The Dynamic 3...Qd6*. Russell Enterprises. ISBN 978-1-888690-11-8.
- Bauer, Christian (2010). *Play the Scandinavian*. Quality Chess. ISBN 978-1-906552-55-8.

### 5.20.6 External links

- Overview of the opening
- Opening Report: 1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 (27531 games)

## 5.21 Nimzowitsch Defence

This article is about the opening moves 1.e4 Nc6. For the more common 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4, see **Nimzo-Indian Defence**.

The **Nimzowitsch Defence** is a somewhat unusual chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. e4 Nc6

This opening is an example of a **hypermodern** opening where Black invites White to occupy the centre of the board at an early stage with pawns. Black's intent is to block or otherwise restrain White's central pawns and, if allowed to do so by inaccurate play by White, eventually undermine the White pawn centre by well-timed pawn advances of his own or by attacking the White pieces defending the centre. **World Champion Garry Kasparov** and **Grandmaster Raymond Keene** wrote that it "has never been fully accepted as a dependable opening. Nevertheless it is sound and offers the maverick spirit a great deal of foreign territory to explore."<sup>[1]</sup>

The Nimzowitsch is included under code B00 ("uncommon king's pawn opening") in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

### 5.21.1 Main variations

- 2.d4 d5. The line that **Aron Nimzowitsch**, the originator of the opening, usually preferred. Now White can choose among (1) 3.e5, which Black usually meets with 3...Bf5, (although 3...f6 is also a decent, though more complex, variation) followed by playing ...e6 (which no longer locks in the light-squared Bishop) and later attacking White's central pawn chain with moves such as ...f6 and ...c5; (2) 3.exd5 Qxd5, followed by either 4.Nf3, seeking to gain time by attacking the **queen** with Nc3, but enabling Black to put pressure on White's centre with 4...Bg4 or 4...e5, or else 4.Nc3 Qxd4 5.Qe2, a risky gambit that can be dangerous to unprepared defenders; and (3) 3.Nc3 dxe4 (3...e6 leads to a type of **French Defence**) 4.d5 Ne5, when White usually continues with 5.Qd4 or 5.Bf4 Ng6 6.Bg3.
- 2.d4 e5. A solid line favored by the late British Grandmaster **Tony Miles**. White can transpose to the **Scotch Game** with 3.Nf3, or play 3.d5 Nce7 (3...Nb8, although perhaps not as bad as it looks, is considered inferior), which gives White only a slight plus score in practice. Another approach is 3.dxe5 Nxe5, when White can seek a quiet positional advantage with 4.Nf3 or play the more aggressive (but potentially weakening) thrust 4.f4.
- 2.Nf3, shown by some databases to be the **most common move**, is often played by White players not eager for a theoretical battle on their opponents' turf.<sup>[2]</sup> 2...e5, transposing to a double king-pawn opening<sup>[3]</sup> may be the best move, but is unlikely to appeal to the hard-core Nimzowitsch player. Other moves, including 2...d6, 2...e6, 2...Nf6, 2...d5, and 2...g6 are playable but tend to lead to inferior variations of the **Pirc Defense**, **French Defence**, **Alekhine's Defence**,

**Scandinavian Defense**, or **Robatsch Defense**, respectively. The sharp 2...f5, the **Colorado Gambit**, although somewhat dubious, was played with some success by the **American International Master Doug Root**, and more recently by the **Finnish International Master Olli Salmensuu** and others. It may lead to wild complications, e.g. 3.exf5 d5 4.Nh4!? e5!? 5.Qh5+ g6 6.fxg6 Nf6! 7.g7+ Nxh5 8.gxh8(Q) Qxh4 9.Qxh7 Nd4, when White is a whole rook up, but Black has a huge lead in development and White's king is in jeopardy. Naiditsch-Doettling, **Dortmund 2000**, ended in a draw after further complications: 10.Qg6+ Kd8 11.d3 Nf4! 12.Qf7 Bb4+ 13.c3 Bg4! 14.Qg8+ Kd7 15.Qg7+ Kc6 16.g3 Nf3+ 17.Kd1 Nd4+ 18.Kd2 Nf3+ 19.Kd1 Nd4+ 1/2-1/2. The **British International Master Gary Lane** advocates the more solid 4.d4 Bxf5 5.Bb5 (trying to control the weakened e5 square) Qd6 6.Ne5 Nf6 7.0-0 Nd7 8.Bxc6 bxc6 9.Qf3! Nxe5 (or 9...e6 10.g4 Bg6 11.Nxg6 hxg6 12.Bf4 Qb4 13.Qd3) 10.Qxf5 Nf7 11.Bf4 Qd7 12.Qxd7+ Kxd7 13.Nd2 when Black's inferior **pawn structure** gave White a small advantage in Shaw versus Salmensuu, **European Team Championship, León 2001** (1-0, 63).<sup>[4]</sup>

### 5.21.2 See also

- **List of chess openings**
- **List of chess openings named after people**

### 5.21.3 References

- [1] Garry Kasparov and Raymond Keene, *Batsford Chess Openings 2*, Collier Books, 1989, p. 228. ISBN 0-02-033991-7.
- [2] The **American International Master Jeremy Silman** writes that "most players (even at the grandmaster level) avoid any pre-studied lines by the opponent by simply replying with 2.Nf3". Jeremy Silman, *The Reassess Your Chess Workbook: How to Master Chess Imbalances*, Siles Press, 2001, p. 383. ISBN 1-890085-05-7.
- [3] For example, this was used by **Magnus Carlsen** against **Bill Gates** in a televised match on January 22, 2014
- [4] **Shaw vs. Salmensuu**

### 5.21.4 External links

- "The Nimzowitsch Defence (1 e4 Nc6) by Edward Winter" (Chess Notes Feature Article)

## 5.22 Alekhine's Defence

**Alekhine's Defence** is a hypermodern chess opening that can begin with the moves:

1. e4 Nf6

Black tempts White's pawns forward to form a broad pawn centre, with plans to undermine and attack the white structure later in the spirit of hypermodern defence. White's imposing mass of pawns in the centre often includes pawns on c4, d4, e5, and f4. Grandmaster Nick de Firmian observes of Alekhine's Defence in MCO-15 (2008), "The game immediately loses any sense of symmetry or balance, which makes the opening a good choice for aggressive fighting players."<sup>[1]</sup>

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) has four codes for Alekhine's Defence, B02 through B05:

- B02: 1.e4 Nf6
- B03: 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 (including the Exchange Variation and Four Pawns Attack)
- B04: 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 (Modern Variation without 4...Bg4)
- B05: 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 Bg4 (Modern Variation with 4...Bg4)

### 5.22.1 History

The opening is named after **Alexander Alekhine**, who introduced it in the 1921 Budapest tournament in games against **Endre Steiner**<sup>[2]</sup> and **Fritz Sämisch**.<sup>[3]</sup> Four years later, the editors of the Fourth Edition of *Modern Chess Openings* (MCO-4) wrote:

Nothing is more indicative of the iconoclastic conceptions of the 'hypermodern school' than the bizarre defence introduced by Alekhine ... . Although opposing to all tenets of the classical school, Black allows his King's Knight to be driven about the board in the early stages of the game, in the expectation of provoking a weakness in White's centre pawns.<sup>[4]</sup>

In addition to Alekhine, another early exponent of the defence was **Ernst Grünfeld**.

### 5.22.2 Use

The popularity of Alekhine's Defence waxes and wanes; currently it is not very common. De Firmian observes, "The fashion could quickly change if some champion of the opening takes up the cause, as the results Black has obtained in practice are good."<sup>[1]</sup> The opening's current highest-rated proponent is Grandmaster **Vassily Ivanchuk**, although **Lev Alburt** played it at grandmaster level almost exclusively during his career and was responsible for many contributions in both theory and practice. De Firmian writes, "Currently Grandmasters **Shabalov** and **Minasian** use the opening with regularity, while **Aronian**, **Adams**, and **Nakamura** will use it on occasion. In the past, great players such as **Fischer** and **Korchnoi** included the defense in their repertoire, leading to its respectable reputation."<sup>[1]</sup>

### 5.22.3 Variations

After the usual **2. e5 Nd5**, three main variations of Alekhine's Defence use 3.d4, but there are other options for White at this point. Two of the most common versions are the *Exchange Variation* and the *Four Pawns Attack*. The Exchange Variation continues 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6. White has some space advantage. Black can capitalise on the half-open centre with ...g6, ...Bg7 with ...Bg4 eventually being played. The Four Pawns Attack continues 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4. White has a somewhat larger space advantage though the centre is not fixed. Black has a number of options. Black can play ...Qd7 with ...0-0-0 and ...f6 putting pressure on White's d pawn. Black can play ...Nb4 with ...c5 hoping to exchange the d pawn. Finally, Black can play ...Be7 with ...0-0 and ...f6 attacking the centre. Minor variations include O'Sullivan's Gambit, 3.d4 b5 (intending 4.Bxb5 c5 5.dxc5?? Qa5+), and 3.d4 d6 4.Bc4, the Balogh Variation.

#### Four Pawns Attack: 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4

Four Pawns Attack 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4

The Four Pawns Attack is White's most ambitious try, and the variation which perhaps illustrates the basic idea of the defence best: Black allows White to make several tempo-gaining attacks on the knight and to erect an apparently imposing pawn centre in the belief that it can later be destroyed. The game can become very sharp since White must either secure his advantage in space or make use of it before Black succeeds in making a successful strike at it. Black must also play vigorously because passive play will be crushed by the White centre. The Four Pawns Attack is not particularly popular because many White players are wary

of entering a sharp tactical line which Black may have prepared. The main line continues 5...dxe5 6.fxe5 Nc6 7.Be3 Bf5 8.Nc3 e6 9.Nf3

An alternative is the sharp Planinc Variation, 5...g5!?. Black hopes for 6. fxe5? dxe5, wrecking White's centre and leaving him with weak pawns. The line is named after **grandmaster Albin Planinc**, who championed it in the 1970s. It was then taken up in the 1990s by correspondence player Michael Schirmer, whose games were noted in a recent book on Alekhine's Defence by notable British GM and Alekhine exponent **Nigel Davies**.

#### Exchange Variation: 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6

Exchange Variation 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6

The Exchange Variation is less ambitious than the Four Pawns Attack. White trades pawns, accepting a more modest spatial advantage. Black's main decision is whether to recapture with the solid 5...exd6, which will lead to a fairly strategic position, or the more ambitious 5...cxd6 when Black has a preponderance of pawns in the centre. The third recapture 5...Qxd6 is also possible since the **fork** 6.c5 can be answered by 6...Qe6+, but the line is considered inferior since Black will sooner or later need to deal with this threat.<sup>[5]</sup>

In the sharper 5...cxd6 line, Black usually aims to attack and undermine the white pawn on d4, and possibly c4 as well. To do this, a usual plan involves a **fianchetto** of the king bishop to g7, playing the other bishop to g4 to remove a knight on f3 which is a key defender of d4, while black knights on b6 and c6 bear down on the white pawns on c4 and d4. Cox gave the game Jainy Gomes vs. Guillermo Soppe to illustrate Black's intentions.

A popular setup from White to prevent Black's plan is the Voronezh Variation (named after the Russian city Voronezh, where the line was invented, by players such as **Grigory Sanakoev**). The Voronezh is defined by the opening sequence 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6 cxd6 6.Nc3 g6 7.Be3 Bg7 8.Rc1 0-0 9.b3. White's setup delays kingside development so that Black has trouble developing pieces in a fashion that harasses White's pieces and assails the centre pawns; for instance there is no knight on f3 which can become a target after ...Bg4, and no bishop on d3 which may be a target after ...Nc6-e5. While 9...Nc6?! is Black's most common reply according to ChessBase's database, after 10.d5 Ne5 Black's knight lacks a target, and will soon be chased out with f2-f4, and this line has scored very poorly for Black.<sup>[5]</sup> The main line in the Voronezh, and the second most common reply, is 9...e5 10.dxe5 dxe5 11.Qxd8 Rxd8 12.c5 N6d7 (This retreat is forced since 12...Nd5?? loses the knight due to the 13.Rd1 pin) when Black must

play carefully to unentangle and challenge the White pawn on c5. Other lines against the Voronezh include 9...f5 leading to sharp play. Other solid moves such as 9...e6, ...Bd7, ...Bf5, and ...a5 are possible as well. According to John Cox, the 9...e5 line is adequate, but Black needs to know the line well.<sup>[5]</sup>

The Voronezh was recommended by **John Emms** and noted as a big problem by **Nigel Davies**,<sup>[6]</sup> leading many players to opt for the more solid 5...exd6 line.

However, the line offers Black less opportunity for counterplay. In this line Black usually develops the king bishop via ...Be7 and ...Bf6, because Bg5 can be bothersome against a fianchetto setup with ...g6 and ...Bg7, e.g. 6.Nc3 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Bg5.<sup>[5]</sup>

#### Modern Variation: 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3

Modern Variation 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3

The Modern Variation is the most common variation of the Alekhine Defence. As in the Exchange Variation, White accepts a more modest spatial advantage, and hopes to be able to hang on to it. There are a number of possible Black responses:

- 4...Bg4, **pinning** the knight is the most common response, which White usually parries with 5.Be2. Black will often voluntarily surrender the **bishop pair** by ...Bxf3 because the white knight is a fairly strong piece, and capturing it undermines the white centre pawns. Champions of this line include **Lev Alburt**, **Vlatko Kovačević** and the late **Vladimir Bagirov**.
- 4...g6, preparing to **fianchetto** a bishop to oppose White's central pawn mass, is also often seen. This variation was played in the thirteenth game of the **Match of the Century** between **Boris Spassky** and **Bobby Fischer**. (The nineteenth game of the same match featured the more common 4...Bg4.) Alburt has also played this line frequently.<sup>[7]</sup> White usually replies with 5.Bc4, the **Keres** Variation.
- 4...dxe5 (the Larsen Variation) is another possibility which can lead to the sharp sacrificial line 5.Nxe5 Nd7 6.Nxf7!? Kxf7 7.Qh5+ Ke6. The sacrifice is, at the very least, good enough to draw after 8.Qg4+; Larsen tried the suicidal 8...Kd6? against Fischer during the Santa Monica Blitz tournament in 1966, and lost quickly after 9.c4.<sup>[8]</sup> Black should therefore acquiesce to the **perpetual check** with 8...Kf7 9.Qh5+ Ke6 etc. Instead, 8.c4 can be played if White is aiming to win.<sup>[5]</sup> White can also simply retreat the knight with 5.Nf3. If Black does not want to allow the sacrifice, other options after 5.Nxe5 are 5...g6 (the Kengis

Variation) and 5...c6 (the Miles Variation). The idea behind both moves is to challenge the e5 knight with Nd7 only after the sacrifice on f7 has become unsound. The Kengis variation looks more natural but white has several sharp ideas such as 6.c4 and the wild 6.Qf3!?. Therefore 5...c6 has become more common; despite the passive look this waiting move discourages white most ambitious continuations. Now 6.c4 can be met with the very interesting 6...Nb4!? while 6.Bc4 can either transpose to quieter lines of the Kengis or give rise to independent variations in which black avoids the king's bishop fianchetto. White's most popular move is 6.Be2 (6.Bd3!?) when black continues with either the immediate Nd7 of 6...Bf5. Against the latter an aggressive possibility (introduced by Kasparov against Short and then improved by Judith Polgar) is 7.g4!?.<sup>[5]</sup> In top level chess, the line with 5...c6 has largely displaced 4...Bg4 as the main line.<sup>[9]</sup>

- 4...c6 is passive but solid, creating a position which is difficult to attack.

In most variations, Black can play ...Bg4 to **transpose** into the 4...Bg4 line.

### Balogh Variation: 3.d4 d6 4.Bc4

Balogh Variation 3.d4 d6 4.Bc4

The first recorded use of this variation was on August 13, 1929, in Carlsbad, Bohemia. Esteban Canal was white and Edgard Colle was black. White resigned after Black's 40th move.<sup>[10]</sup>

Unlike several other sidelines, 4. Bc4 is fairly popular. The line contains some traps that can snare the unwary. For example 4...dxe5 5.dxe5 Nb6?? loses the queen to 6.Bxf7+!. Instead, the main line is 4...Nb6 5.Bb3, when Black has usually played 5...dxe5 6.Qh5 e6 7.dxe5 (the "old main line" according to Cox) or 5...Bf5 when White can among other things try the obstructive pawn sacrifice 6.e6. In either case, White obtains attacking chances, and so Taylor recommends 5...d5 followed by 6...e6 to reach a position akin to the **French Defense**.<sup>[11]</sup>

### Two Pawns Attack: 3.c4 Nb6 4.c5

Two Pawns Attack 3.c4 Nb6 4.c5

The **Two Pawns Attack** (also known as the **Lasker Attack** or the **Chase Variation**<sup>[12][13]</sup>) is also an ambitious try. White may gain attacking prospects, but it might cost

a pawn to do so.<sup>[14]</sup> White's pawns on c5 and e5 secure a spatial advantage, but the d5 square has been weakened. Unlike the Four Pawns Attack, the White centre is not as fluid and the game takes on a more strategic character.

Aesthetically, 4.c5 looks positionally suspect, since White's pawn advances have severely weakened the d5-square.<sup>[15]</sup> White's intention is to grab space and mobility so that those strategic deficiencies are of little consequence.

Black must play 4...Nd5, whereupon White will usually challenge the knight with moves like Bc4 and Nc3. Black can defend the knight with ...c6 or ...e6, sometimes playing both. Typically, Black then challenges White's pawns on e5 and c5 with moves like ...d6 and ...b6.

The statistics presented by Cox show this variation scoring poorly for White, with all of Black's main defenses scoring at least 50%.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Two Knights Variation: 3.Nc3

Two Knights Variation 3.Nc3

The Two Knights Variation is a variation where White immediately accepts **doubled pawns** after 3...Nxc3 for some compensation. After 4.dxc3 this compensation is rapid piece development. Although the line after 4...d6, challenging the e-pawn often can lead to fairly dull positions, the position remains open and Black can quickly succumb with poor defense, for example after 5.Bc4 dxe5?? 6.Bxf7+!, White wins the queen on d8. After 4.bxc3 White's compensation for the doubled pawns is a big centre that can be used as a basis for a kingside attack. The resulting pawn structure leads to position similar to that of the Winawer variation of the **French Defense**.<sup>[5]</sup>

If Black does not want to defend against White's attacking opportunities against 3...Nxc3 4.dxc3, then 3...e6 is a reasonable alternative that was Alekhine's choice when meeting the Two Knights, and this defense has been advocated by Taylor.<sup>[16]</sup> If White plays 4.d4, then 4...Nxc3 forces White into the bxc3 line reminiscent of the French. If 4.Nxd5 exd5, Black will quickly dissolve the doubled pawns with ...d6, and the resulting position will tend to be drawish.

### Minor sidelines after 2.e5 Nd5

In Endre Steiner-Alexander Alekhine, Budapest 1921, the first high level game with the Alekhine Defense, White played 3.d4 d6 4.Bg5. Cox recommends 4...h6 5.Bh4 dxe5 6.dxe5 Bf5, followed by ...Nc6 and ...Ndb4, targeting c2.

4.Bg5 from Steiner-Alekhine

Another rare line, but one that scores well in practice is 3.d4 d6 4.Be2, preventing Black from playing 4...Bg4 while retaining the option of making the pawn advance f2-f4.<sup>[5]</sup>

3.c4 Nb6 4.a4

After 3.c4 Nb6 4.a4, White aims at chasing the Black knight away followed by a pawn sacrifice that impairs Black's development, for example by 4...d6 5.a5 Nd7 6.e6. It is possible for Black to allow this, but it is simpler to prevent it by 4...a5. White's main continuation is to deploy the queenside rook for duties on the kingside with 5.Ra3, followed by Rg3 at some point when the attack on g7 is supposed to tie Black down from developing the bishop to e7. However, after 5...d6 6.exd6 exd6 7.Rg3 Bf5, Black can carry through with 8...Be7 anyway, since after 9.Rxg7 the rook would be trapped and lost to 9...Bg6 and 10...Bf6.<sup>[5]</sup> The idea for this unusual early "rook lift" probably originated with the well-known American International Master Emory Tate.<sup>[17][18]</sup> Women's World Champion Grandmaster Maria Muzychuk, World Junior Champion GM Lu Shanglei and GM Nazar Firman have experimented with this line and achieved some success with it.<sup>[19]</sup>

### Alternatives to 2...Nd5

After 2.e5, the 2...Nd5 is almost universally played. The two other knight moves that do not hang it to the queen on d1 are 2...Ng8 and 2...Ne4.

- 2...Ng8, undeveloping the knight immediately, was named the "Brooklyn Defense" in honour of his hometown by Grandmaster Joel Benjamin, who calls this his "pet line".<sup>[20]</sup> Although Black might be said to be giving odds of three moves, White only has a small advantage according to theory.<sup>[21]</sup> The first recorded use of the Brooklyn Variation was in 1905 in Vienna where Aron Nimzowitsch with White checkmated Adolf Albin on the 34th move.
- Very dubious is 2...Ne4?, which John L. Watson and Eric Schiller dub the "Mokele Mbembe". They analyze 3.d4 f6 4.Bd3 d5 5.f3 Ng5 6.Bxg5 fxg5 7.f4! g6! 8.Nf3! g4 (they also analyze 8...gxf4 9.Ng5! e6 10.Qg4! Qe7 11.0-0 and 8...Bg4 9.h3, both leading a large advantage for White) 9.Ng5 Bh6 10.Nxh7 Rxh7 11.Bxg6+ Rf7 12.Qd3 Bf8 13.f5 e6 14.f6 Qd7 15.h3! g3 16.Qxg3, with a winning advantage for White.<sup>[22]</sup> Nunn's *Chess Openings* concludes that White gets a large advantage with 3.d4 f6 (or 3...e6 4.Nh3 h6

5.Qg4 d5 6.f3 h5 7.Qf4 g5 8.Nxg5 Nxg5 9.Qxg5 Be7 10.Qg7) 4.Qh5+ g6 5.Qh4 d5 6.Bd3.<sup>[23]</sup>

### Alternatives to 2.e5

Instead of chasing Black's knight, White may defend the e4-pawn, either directly or through tactical means.

- 2.Nc3 is by far White's most common alternative to 2.e5; in fact Cox noted that he saw this move in over half his games with the Alekhine. It is often played by amateurs and those wishing to avoid a **theoretical battle** on territory more familiar to their opponents. Cox, however, wrote that many White players are bluffing, and in fact know nothing about either the **Vienna Game** or the **Four Knights Game**, to which the game can easily **transpose** if Black plays 2...e5, citing one book which recommended 2.Nc3 while assuring readers that 2...e5 is uncommon.<sup>[5]</sup> Another transposition Black may enter is 2...d6, which usually leads to the **Pirc Defence**. But the independent Alekhine line is 2...d5, known as the **Scandinavian Variation**. After 2...d5, 3.exd5 Nxd5 4.Bc4 Nb6 or ...Nxc3 is considered roughly equal, while 4...e6 is solid but blocks in the light-squared bishop. 3.exd5 Nxd5 4.g3 has been played by the Danish correspondence player Ove Ekebjærg, when Harald Keilhack recommends 4...Nxc3 5.bxc3 Qd5! 6.Qf3! (6.Nf3 Qe4+ is awkward in light of 7.Be2 Bh3 or 7.Qe2 Qxc2) Qe6+! 7.Qe2 ("on 7.Be2 or 7.Ne2, 7...Bd7 is unpleasant") Qxe2+ 8.Nxe2 Bd7! 9.Bg2 Bc6 10.0-0 Bxg2 11.Kxg2 Nc6 12.d3 g6 13.Rb1 0-0-0 14.c4 Bg7, when "Black has a rather comfortable position", as in Ekebjærg-Alcantara Soares, corr. 1989.<sup>[24]</sup> More combative is 2...d5 3.e5, when Black can choose among 3...d4, 3...Nfd7 (transposing to the **Steinitz** variation of the **French Defence** after 4.d4 e6, but 4.e6!? is a sharp alternative), 3...Ne4!?, and even 3...Ng8. While most grandmasters play the mainline 2.e5, Jonny Hector regularly plays 2.Nc3 against the Alekhine, and has scored well against the 2...d5 variation. His ideas have left White with a theoretical edge. Textbook authors of the Alekhine Defence, including Davies, Cox, and Taylor, have therefore encouraged 2...e5 over 2...d5.
- 2.d3 (the **Maroczy Variation**) is less common. Although playable, 2.d3 blocks in White's light-squared bishop, so the variation is considered somewhat passive. If White fianchettoes that bishop, transposition to a **King's Indian Attack** is likely. Lev Alburt and Eric Schiller call 2.d3 "insipid" and recommend 2...d5 (or 3.Nd2 e5 with a reversed **Philidor's Defence**) 3.e5 Nfd7 4.f4 (4.d4 c5 5.c3 Nc6 leaves Black a tempo up

on the French Defence) c5 5.Nf3 e6 6.g3!? Nc6 7.Bg2 Be7 8.0-0 b5 with equality.<sup>[25]</sup>

- 2.Bc4 is rarely seen, since it allows Black to gain the bishop pair and seize space in the center. Alburt and Schiller write that after 2...Nxe4 3.Bxf7+ Kxf7 4.Qh5+ Kg8 or 4...g6 5.Qd5+ e6 6.Qxe4 Bg7 7.Qf4 Ke8! “Black has nothing to worry about.”<sup>[26]</sup> If Black does not want his king chased about, playable alternatives are 2...e5 (transposing to the Bishop’s Opening), 2...d5 and 2...e6.
- 2.f3 is also rare, but players who like to play the Black side of the Latvian Gambit can in effect wind up playing it after 1.e4 Nf6 2.f3 e5 3.f4!?.<sup>[27]</sup>

#### 5.22.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

#### 5.22.5 References

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- [11] Taylor, chapter 8 “Fourth or fifth move sidelines”
- [12] Burgess, Graham, *The Complete Alekhine*, 1992 B.T. Batsford Ltd., p.45. ISBN 0-8050-2425-5
- [13] Taylor, Chapter 7, The Chase Variation - Back to the Centre
- [14] DeFirmian, Nick and Walter Korn, *Modern Chess Openings*, 1990 M-Mate Chess. ISBN 0-8129-1730-8. Referred to as the Two Pawns Attack in lines 28-30.
- [15] Taylor, Page 182.
- [16] Taylor, chapter 9 “Third Move Sidelines”
- [17] [http://www.thechessdrum.net/palview5/tatevariation\(selected\).htm](http://www.thechessdrum.net/palview5/tatevariation(selected).htm)
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- [21] Most opening treatises do not mention this line. According to *Nunn’s Chess Openings*, White gets a slight advantage after 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.h3. John Nunn, Graham Burgess, John Emms, and Joe Gallagher, *Nunn’s Chess Openings*, Everyman Publishers, 1999, p. 129 n. 30. ISBN 1-85744-221-0.
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- Burgess, Graham (1992). *The Complete Alekhine*. B. T. Batsford Ltd. ISBN 0-8050-2425-5.
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## 5.23 Modern Defense

The **Modern Defense** (also known as the **Robatsch Defence** after Karl Robatsch) is a **hypermodern chess opening** in which Black allows White to occupy the center with pawns on d4 and e4, then proceeds to attack and undermine this “ideal” center without attempting to occupy it themselves. The opening has been most notably used by British grandmasters Nigel Davies and Colin McNab.

The Modern Defense is closely related to the **Pirc Defence**, the primary difference being that in the Modern, Black delays developing his knight to f6. (The delay of ...Nf6 attacking White’s pawn on e4 gives White the option of blunting the g7-bishop with c2–c3.) **Transpositional** possibilities between the two openings are rife.

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) classifies the Modern Defense as code B06, while codes B07 to B09 are assigned to the Pirc. The tenth edition of *Modern Chess Openings* (1965) grouped the Pirc and Robatsch together as the “Pirc–Robatsch Defense”.

### 5.23.1 Main lines

A typical move order for the Modern Defense is **1. e4 g6 2. d4 Bg7**, with main lines:

- **3. Nc3 d6 4. f4 c6 5. Nf3 Bg4** (ECO code B06);
- **3. c4** (ECO code A40) **d6 4. Nc3 Nc6 5. Be3 e5 6. d5 Ne7** (7.g4 will be answered by 7...f5 8.gxf5 gxf5 9.Qh5+ Ng6 10.exf5 Qh4 11.Qxh4 Nxh4 12.Nb5 Kd8).

### 5.23.2 2.Nf3

...c5 to Sicilian, ...Bg7

### 5.23.3 2.c4

...Bg7

### 5.23.4 2.Nc3

...c5 to Sicilian, ...Bg7

### 5.23.5 Fischer’s suggestion: 3. h4!?

Bobby Fischer suggested the move 3.h4!? as an unorthodox try against 1...g6 2.d4 Bg7, in his annotation to a game

against **Pal Benko**.<sup>[1]</sup> (Fischer played 3.Nc3 in the actual game.) The idea is to prise open Black’s **kingside** by h4–h5 followed by hxg6 (...gxh5 would greatly weaken the cover to Black’s king).

### 5.23.6 Unusual White responses

The flexibility and toughness of the Modern Defense has provoked some very aggressive responses by White, including the attack crudely named the **Monkey’s Bum**, a typical sequence being 1.e4 g6 2.Bc4 Bg7 3.Qf3. (A more refined version is the **Monkey’s Bum Deferred**, where White plays Bc4 and Qf3 only after developing their queen’s knight.)

Other unusual openings can be reached after 1.e4 g6. The **Hippopotamus Defence** is one such system. Another is the **Norwegian Defence** (also known as the **North Sea Defence**) which begins 1.e4 g6 2.d4 Nf6 3.e5 Nh5. (If White plays 4.g4, Black retreats the knight with 4...Ng7. On 4.Be2, Black can retreat the knight or **gambit** a pawn with 4...d6!? If White plays 3.Nc3 instead of 3.e5, Black can transpose to the Pirc Defence with 3...d6 or continue in unconventional fashion with 3...d5!?)

### 5.23.7 Averbakh System

1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.c4 d6 4.Nc3

The *Modern Defence, Averbakh System* (ECO code A42) can be reached by the lines:

1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.c4 d6 4.Nc3

1.d4 g6 2.c4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.e4

Possible moves for Black at this point include 4...Nf6, 4...Nc6, 4...e5, and 4...Nd7. The move 4...Nf6 leads to a position of the King’s Indian Defence, where White can play moves such as 5.Nf3, 5.f3, 5.Be2, 5.f4, and so on.

### 5.23.8 Kavalek vs. Suttles

In the following game played at the Nice **Olympiad** in 1974, Canadian **Grandmaster Duncan Suttles**, one of the Modern’s leading exponents, defeats Czech-American **Grandmaster Lubomir Kavalek**:

**1. e4 g6 2. d4 d6 3. Nf3 Bg7 4. Be2 Nf6 5. Nc3** (Pirc Defence by **transposition**) **5... a6 6. a4 0-0 7. 0-0 b6 8. Re1 Bb7 9. Bc4 e6 10.**

**Bf4 Nbd7 11. Qd2 b5!** (initiating a deep combination; Suttles later remarked that Kavalek has occupied the center and developed his pieces in the manner advocated by **Fred Reinfeld**, yet now stands worse) **12. axb5 axb5 13. Rxa8 Qxa8 14. Bxb5 Bxe4 15. Nxe4 Nxe4 16. Rxe4 Qxe4 17. Bxd7 Ra8 18. h4 Qb7!** (despite his material advantage, White is in trouble; note that his bishop on d7 is nearly trapped) **19. d5 e5 20. Bh6 Qxb2 21. h5 Ra1+ 22. Kh2 Qb1 23. Bxg7 Qh1+ 24. Kg3 Kxg7 25. Bh3 Qc1 26. h6+ Kf6 27. c4 Qxd2 28. Nxd2 Kg5 29. Ne4+ Kxh6 30. Bd7 f5 31. Nf6 Ra7 32. Bb5 g5 33. Ng8+ Kg7 34. Ne7 Kf6 35. Nc6 Ra3+ 36. Kh2 h5 37. Nb8 h4 38. Na6 g4 39. Nxc7 Ra2 40. Kg1 g3 41. fxc3 hxc3 42. Kf1 e4 0–1**<sup>[2]</sup>

### 5.23.9 References

- [1] Bobby Fischer, *My 60 Memorable Games*, 2008, p. 286
- [2] Kavalek vs. Suttles, Nice Olympiad 1974 at chess-games.com

### 5.23.10 Further reading

- Davies, Nigel (2008). *Starting Out: The Modern*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 9781857445664.

## 5.24 Monkey's Bum

The **Monkey's Bum** is a variation of the **Modern Defense**, a chess opening. Although it may also be loosely defined as any approach against the Modern Defense involving an early Bc4 and Qf3, threatening "Scholar's mate", it is strictly defined by the sequence of moves:

1. e4 g6
2. Bc4 Bg7
3. Qf3 e6
4. d4 Bxd4
5. Ne2 Bg7
6. Nbc3

The **Monkey's Bum Deferred** is a more respected variation in which White develops his queen's knight before playing Bc4 and Qf3.

### 5.24.1 Origin

The **Monkey's Bum** was discovered and championed by IM **Nigel Povah** in the 1970s during a wave of popularity for the Modern Defence. In 1972, after **Keene** and **Botterill** published their book *The Modern Defence*, Povah began looking for a response to the opening. He happened across the game **Ljubojević–Keene, Palma de Mallorca 1971**, which started 1.e4 g6 2.d4 d6 3.Bc4 Bg7 4.f4 Nf6 and eventually ended in a draw. Intrigued by Ljubojević's early Bc4, Povah began investigating a rapid assault on f7 with 3.Qf3. When he showed the first few moves to Ken Coates, a friend at **Leeds**, Coates declared, "If that works then I'm a monkey's bum!" The name stuck. The **Monkey's Bum** first appeared in print five years later in the *British Chess Magazine*. Povah wrote an article on the theory of the **Monkey's Bum**, in which he stated that although he had never yet lost with the variation, it was still "in its infancy".

### 5.24.2 Analysis

In playing the **Monkey's Bum**, White's idea is to gain active piece play by a sacrifice of the d4-pawn, much like the **Smith-Morra Gambit**. In practice however, such compensation proves tenuous in the **Monkey's Bum** proper, as evidenced by the following game:

N. Povah–S. Kagan, Birmingham 1977  
 1.e4 g6 2.Bc4 Bg7 3.Qf3 e6 4.d4 Bxd4 5.Ne2 Bg7 6.Nbc3 Nc6 7.Bf4 Ne5 8.Bxe5 Bxe5 9.Qe3 d6 10.0–0–0 Bd7 11.f4 Bg7 12.g4 a6 13.h4 b5 14.Bb3 a5 15.a4 bxa4 16.Nxa4 h5 17.e5 Nh6 18.exd6 Nxc4 19.Qc5 c6 20.Nd4 Bxd4 21.Rxd4 0–0 22.Nb6 Rb8 23.Nxd7 Qxd7 24.Ba4 Qb7 25.b3 Qb6 26.Qxb6 Rxb6 27.Rc4 Rd8 28.Bxc6 Rxd6 29.Bf3 Ne3 30.Ra4 Rb4 31.Rxa5 Rxf4 32.Bb7 Rb6 33.Ba8 Nf5 34.Kb2 Nxb4 35.Ka3 Nf5 36.c4 Nd4 37.Rb1 Nc2+ 38.Ka2 Nb4+ 39.Kb2 Rb8 40.c5 Nd3+ 0–1

### 5.24.3 Monkey's Bum Deferred

After 1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 c6 4.Bc4 d6 5.Qf3

A much more popular and respected approach against the Modern Defense is the **Monkey's Bum Deferred**. It has been employed by such notable grandmasters as **John Nunn**, **Sergei Rublevsky** and **Judit Polgár**. It is distinct from the **Monkey's Bum** proper in that the attempt to create the "Scholar's mate" threat with Bc4 and Qf3 only occurs after White has developed his queen's knight. A typical sequence of the **Monkey's Bum Deferred** is 1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3

c6 4.Bc4 d6 5.Qf3 (see diagram). Usually White will castle kingside and undertake an attack by means of the pawn thrust f2–f4.

The following spectacular game is probably the most famous success of the Monkey's Bum Deferred and forced it to be considered with respect by the chess world:

Polgar–Shirov, Donner Memorial, Amsterdam, 1995

1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 c6 4.Bc4 d6 5.Qf3 e6 6.Nge2 b5 7.Bb3 a5 8.a3 Ba6 9.d5 cxd5 10.exd5 e5 11.Ne4 Qc7 12.c4 bxc4 13.Ba4+ Nd7 14.N2c3 Ke7 15.Nxd6 Qxd6 16.Ne4 Qxd5 17.Bg5+ Ndf6 18.Rd1 Qb7 19.Rd7+ Qxd7 20.Bxd7 h6 21.Qd1 1–0

#### 5.24.4 See also

- List of chess openings

#### 5.24.5 References

- Povah, Nigel (August 1977). “Monkey Business with 2♙c4 against the Modern Defence”. *British Chess Magazine* **97** (8): 350–53.

#### 5.24.6 External links

- British Championships 2000

### 5.25 Owen's Defence

**Owen's Defence** (also known as the **Queen's Fianchetto Defence**<sup>[1]</sup> or **Greek Defense**<sup>[2]</sup>) is an uncommon chess opening defined by the moves:

1. e4 b6

By playing 1...b6, Black prepares to fianchetto the queen's bishop where it will participate in the battle for the centre. The downside of this plan is that White can occupy the centre with pawns and gain a spatial advantage. Moreover, 1...b6 does not prepare kingside castling as 1...g6 does, and it is harder for Black to augment his pressure against the centre with ...f5, which weakens the kingside, than it is to play the corresponding move ...c5 after 1...g6.<sup>[3]</sup> Owen's Defence accordingly has a dubious reputation.<sup>[4][5][6]</sup> The move ...b6 has been played on the first or second move by Grandmasters Jonathan Speelman,

Pavel Blatny, Tony Miles, Edvins Kengis, and Normunds Miezis, and International Masters Bricard and Filipovic.<sup>[7]</sup>

Instead of fianchettoing, Black can also play his bishop to the a6–f1 diagonal (the Guatemala Defence).

Owen's Defence is classified as code B00 by the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

#### 5.25.1 History

The opening is named after the English vicar and strong 19th-century amateur chess player John Owen, an early exponent.<sup>[1]</sup> Howard Staunton wrote in 1847 that 1.e4 b6, “which the Italians call 'Il Fianchetto di Donna,' although disapproved of by the earlier writers, may be made by the second player without harm, if followed speedily by [...e6] and [...c5].”<sup>[8]</sup>

Using his opening, Owen defeated Paul Morphy in an informal game in London, 1858.<sup>[9]</sup> An additional game in the match featuring this opening, where Owen varied on move 5, was won by Morphy.<sup>[10]</sup>

#### 5.25.2 Theory

The theory of Owen's Defence is less developed than that of other openings. This makes it attractive to some players, since their opponents will often be ill-prepared for it and hence forced to think for themselves.<sup>[3]</sup> GM Christian Bauer observes:<sup>[11]</sup>

To be honest, I don't think Black can equalise as quickly with 1...b6 as he sometimes does in standard openings, and he may suffer against a well-prepared opponent. Then again, the well-prepared opponent is rare for such marginal variations as 1...b6, and in any case, with reasonable play I'm sure White can't get more than a slight advantage from the opening – a risk everyone is running as Black, aren't they?

According to MCO-15, after 2.d4 Bb7 White gets the advantage with either:

- **3. Bd3 e6 4. Nf3 c5 5. c3 Nf6** (5...cxd4 6.cxd4 Bb4+ 7.Nc3 Nf6 8.Qe2 d5 9.e5 Ne4 10.0-0!? Bxc3 11.bxc3 Nxc3 12.Qe3 Nc6 13.Bb2 Ne4 14.Ba3 and White had a large advantage in Adams–Vanderwaeren, Moscow Olympiad 1994) **6. Nbd2 Nc6 7. a3! d5 8. e5 Nfd7 9. b4 Be7 10. 0-0 0-0 11. Re1** “with a clear plus”, or
- **3. Nc3 e6 4. Nf3 Bb4 5. Bd3 Nf6 6. Bg5 h6 7. Bxf6 Bxc3+ 8. bxc3 Qxf6 9. 0-0 d6 10. Nd2 e5 11. f4 Qe7 12. Qg4**, as in David–Bauer, France 2005.<sup>[12]</sup>

### 5.25.3 Illustrative game

Speelman vs. Basman, 1984

Final position

Speelman–Basman, British Championship 1984:

**1. e4 e6 2. Nc3 b6 3. d4 Bb7** Transposing to a position more commonly reached by 1.e4 b6 2.d4 Bb7 3.Nc3 e6. **4. Bd3 Nf6 5. Nge2 c5 6. d5! a6** 6...exd5 7.exd5 Nxd5 8.Nxd5 Bxd5 9.Nf4 Bc6 (9...Be6? 10.Be4 wins; 9...Qe7+!?)<sup>[13]</sup> 10.Bc4! “gives White strong pressure”.<sup>[14]</sup> **7. a4 exd5 8. exd5 Nxd5 9. Nxd5 Bxd5 10. Nf4 Be6 11. Be4 Ra7 12. 0-0 Be7** Watson and Schiller also give 12...g6 13.a5! as favoring White after 13...bxa5 14.Bd2 or 13...b5 14.Be3 d6 15.b4 Be7 16.Nxe6 fxe6 17.Qg4 Qc8 18.bxc5 dxc5 19.Bh6, intending Rad1, Rfe1, and h4–h5 “with great pressure for just a pawn”.<sup>[15]</sup> **13. Ra3 0-0 14. Rg3 f5 15. Bd5 Rf6?** Better is 15...Bxd5!? 16.Qxd5+ Rf7 17.Nh5 with a strong attack.<sup>[13]</sup> **16. Re1 Bxd5 17. Qxd5+ Rf7 18. Nh5 g6 19. Bh6 Nc6 20. Rge3 1-0**<sup>[16]</sup> (see diagram) White threatens 21.Nf6+! Bxf6 (21...Kh8 22.Qxf7) 22.Re8+. On 20...gxh5, 21.Rg3+ wins; 20...Bf8 21.Re8 gxh5 23.Bxf8!; 20...Ra8 21.Rxe7! Nxe7 and now either 22.Rxe7 Qxe7 23.Qxa8+ or 22.Nf6+ Kh8 23.Qxf7 wins.<sup>[13]</sup>

### 5.25.4 Matovinsky Gambit

A pitfall for Black in this opening, the **Matovinsky Gambit**,<sup>[17]</sup> dates from a game by the 17th-century Italian chess player and writer **Gioachino Greco**.

Greco–NN, 1619: **1. e4 b6 2. d4 Bb7 3. Bd3 f5?** Bauer calls this move “simply suicidal”.<sup>[18]</sup> Black gravely weakens his kingside in an attempt to gain material, but White can win by falling into Black’s “trap”. Normal is 3...e6 or 3...Nf6.<sup>[19]</sup> Also possible is 3...g6 (“!” – Andrew Martin) heading for a **Hippopotamus Defense**, when Martin considers 4.f4 f5! (as in Serpik–Blatny, U.S. Open 2003)<sup>[20]</sup> strong for Black.<sup>[21]</sup> **4. exf5! Bxg2 5. Qh5+ g6 6. fxxg6** (see diagram) **Nf6?? 7. gxh7+ Nxh5 8. Bg6# 1-0**<sup>[22]</sup>

Greco vs. NN, 1619

Position after 6.fxxg6

A better try for Black is 6...Bg7! Staunton wrote in 1847 that White got the advantage with 7.gxh7+ Kf8 8.hxg8=Q+ Kxg8 9.Qg4 Bxh1 10.h4 e6 11.h5.<sup>[8]</sup> Over 120 years later, Black improved on this analysis with both 10...Qf8 (“!” – Soltis) 11.h5 Qf6 12.h6 Rxh6 13.Bxh6 Qxh6 Hendler–Radchenko, Kiev 1970 and 10...Bd5 (“!” – Kapitanianak) 11.h5 Be6 12.Qg2 Rxh5 Schmit–Vitolins, Latvia 1969, winning quickly in both games.<sup>[23][24]</sup> However, White is winning after 7.Qf5! (instead of 7.gxh7+)

Nf6 8.Bh6!! Bxh6 (on 8...Kf8, White wins with 9.Bxg7+ Kxg7 10.gxh7 Bxh1 12.Qg6+ Kf8 13.Qh6+ Kf7 transposing to line b below,<sup>[18]</sup> or 9.Qg5 Bxh1 10.gxh7<sup>[25]</sup>) 9.gxh7 and now (a) 9...Kf8 10.Qg6 Bc1 11.Qxg2 Bxb2 12.Ne2 “and Rg1 will prove lethal”<sup>[18]</sup> or (b) 9...Bxh1 10.Qg6+ Kf8 11.Qxh6+ Kf7 12.Nh3 with a winning attack.<sup>[12][18][25]</sup> Den Broeder–Wegener, correspondence 1982, concluded 12...Qf8 13.Bg6+ Ke6 14.Qf4 d5 15.Bf5+ Kf7 16.Ng5+ Ke8 17.Qxc7 1-0.<sup>[26]</sup>

According to both Soltis and Kapitanianak, 7.gxh7+ Kf8 8.Nf3! (which Soltis attributes to F. A. Spinhoven of the Netherlands) is also strong: (a) 8...Bxf3? 9.Qxf3+ Nf6 10.Qxa8; (b) 8...Bxh1 9.Ne5 Bxe5 (9...Qe8 10.Ng6+) 10.dxe5 Bd5 11.hxg8=Q+ Kxg8 12.Qg6+ Kf8 13.Bh6+; (c) 8...Nf6 9.Qg6 Bxh1 10.Bh6 Rxh7 (10...Bxh6 11.Qxh6+ Kf7 12.Ng5+) 11.Ng5 Bxh6 12.Nxh7+ Nxh7 13.Qxh6+; or (d) 8...Nf6 9.Qg6 Bxf3 10.Rg1 Rxh7 11.Qg3!! Be4 12.Bxe4 Nxe4 13.Qf3+ Kg8 14.Qxe4 Nc6 (14...d5 15.Qe6+ Kh8 16.Nc3) 15.Bf4 with an extra pawn for White.<sup>[27][28]</sup> Boris Avrukh also recommends this line, and notes that 13...Nf6 (instead of 13...Kg8) 14.Qxa8 Rxh2 15.Bf4 Rh4 16.Qg2 Rg4 17.Qh2 leaves White “an exchange up with an easily winning position”.<sup>[29]</sup> Watson writes that although 7.Qf5! is the “traditional” refutation and does indeed win, “the analysis is complicated”, and Spinhoven’s 8.Nf3! “is clearer”.<sup>[30]</sup>

### 5.25.5 Guatemala Defense

The **Guatemala Defence** (1.e4 b6 2.d4 Ba6). Black’s bishop occupies the diagonal a6–f1. Although the Guatemala does not evince high opening ambition, neither does it lose material.

Instead of fianchettoing, Black can proceed differently by playing his queen’s bishop to a6, the **Guatemala Defense**,<sup>[31]</sup> so-named because the Guatemala Chess Club used the line in a 1949 correspondence game.<sup>[32]</sup> Andrew Soltis writes that it has “no other discernible benefit than to get out of ‘book’ as quickly as possible”.<sup>[32]</sup> Joel Benjamin and Eric Schiller see some logic in Black’s concept to exchange the white bishop as soon as possible, as it often proves troublesome for Black in many openings.<sup>[33]</sup> White gets the advantage with 2.d4 Ba6 3.Bxa6 Nxa6 4.Nf3 Qc8!? 5.0-0 Qb7 6.Re1 e6 7.c4.<sup>[34]</sup>

The Guatemalan bishop deployment can also occur on Black’s third move, from various transpositions. For example after 1.e4 b6 2.d4 e6, 1.e4 e6 2.d4 b6, or 1.d4 b6 2.e4 e6, Black can follow up in all cases with 3...Ba6.

### 5.25.6 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 5.25.7 References

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- [2] ECO codes with names by Bill Wall.
- [3] Christian Bauer, *Play 1...b6*, Everyman Chess, 2005, p. 5. ISBN 1-85744-410-8.
- [4] Owen's Defence "enjoyed a brief revival at the hands of American IM Regan and Yugoslav GM Sahović. Unfortunately, the attention it received unearthed more accurate lines for White and it is currently considered insufficient." Garry Kasparov and Raymond Keene, *Batsford Chess Openings 2*, Collier Books, 1989, p. 228. ISBN 0-02-033991-7.
- [5] Owen's Defence is "viewed by theory as unreliable". Nick de Firmian, *Modern Chess Openings*, 15th edition, Random House Puzzles & Games, 2008, p. 385. ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7.
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- [9] Paul Morphy vs John Owen, London m2 1858 Chess-Games.com. Retrieved on 2011-08-29.
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- [33] Benjamin, Joel; Schiller, Eric (1987). "Guatemala Defence". *Unorthodox Openings*. Macmillan Publishing Company. pp. 117–18. ISBN 0-02-016590-0.
- [34] Watson and Schiller 1995, pp. 111–12.

### 5.25.8 External links

- Marcin Maciaga, Flexible System of Defensive Play for Black – 1...b6

## 5.26 St. George Defence

The **St. George Defence** (also known as the **Baker's Defence**, **Birmingham Defence**, or **Basman Counterattack**) is an unorthodox chess opening for Black. The opening begins with the moves:

1. e4 a6!?

The St. George Defence is given ECO code B00 as a King's Pawn Opening.

### 5.26.1 History

The first known chess game involving the St. George was a simultaneous game between an English amateur, J. Baker, and the first official **World Chess Champion**, **Wilhelm Steinitz**, on 11 December 1868. The game was won by Baker. The advocates of the opening are generally players willing to sacrifice the centre in order to attack from the flank, and to avoid theory. **Michael Basman** has been known to play the St. George, as did **Tony Miles**.

In perhaps its most famous appearance, Miles defeated reigning World Champion **Anatoly Karpov** in the 1980 European Team Championship in Skara, Sweden. The opening also acquired the name of "Birmingham Defence" at this time, after Miles' hometown.

**Boris Spassky** also played the St. George Defence, albeit by transposition, in the 22nd game of his 1966 world championship match against World Champion **Tigran Petrosian**. That game began 1.d4 b5 (the **Polish Defence**) 2.e4 Bb7 3.f3 a6 (transposing to the St. George). This was an inauspicious outing for the defence, however: Petrosian won, giving him the 12 points needed to retain his title.

### 5.26.2 Theory

The St. George Defence is generally considered an inferior response to 1.e4 compared to 1...e5, 1...e6, 1...c5, or 1...c6. The St. George Defence is considered more dubious than **Owen's Defence** (1.e4 b6 2.d4 Bb7), since Black spends three moves just to develop his queen bishop, as opposed to two in Owen's Defence, while White occupies the centre and is ready to castle in three more moves.

The major lines in the opening start with 1.e4 a6!? 2.d4 b5 and then branch. (White can also show the defence respect by playing the strong if rarely played 1.e4 a6 2.c4 preventing Black's 2...b5 or making it into a gambit.) The main line continues 3.Nf3 Bb7 4.Bd3 e6 5.0-0 Nf6. Another important line is the Three Pawns Attack, sometimes called the St. George Gambit, which continues 3.c4 e6!? 4.cxb5 axb5 5.Bxb5 Bb7. (Black can also play 3...Bb7 and offer the b-pawn for the more valuable white e-pawn.) The St. George is also sometimes used to prevent a white bishop from occupying b5 before continuing as in **French Defence**.

Much of the theoretical work on the defence was done by the English IM **Michael Basman**.

### 5.26.3 Illustrative game

**Anatoly Karpov–Tony Miles**, European Team Championship, Skara 1980:<sup>[1][2]</sup>

1.e4 a6 2.d4 b5 3.Nf3 Bb7 4.Bd3 Nf6 5.Qe2 e6 6.a4

c5 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.Nbd2 b4 9.e5 Nd5 10.Ne4 Be7 11.0-0 Nc6 12.Bd2 Qc7 13.c4 bxc3 14.Nxc3 Nxc3 15.Bxc3 Nb4 16.Bxb4 Bxb4 17.Rac1 Qb6 18.Be4 0-0!? 19.Ng5 (19.Bxh7+!? is a dangerous sacrifice) h6 20.Bh7+ Kh8 21.Bb1 Be7 22.Ne4 Rac8 23.Qd3 Rxc1 24.Rxc1 Qxb2 25.Re1 Qxe5 26.Qxd7 Bb4 27.Re3 Qd5 28.Qxd5 Bxd5 29.Nc3 Rc8 30.Ne2 g5 31.h4 Kg7 32.hxg5 hxg5 33.Bd3 a5 34.Rg3 Kf6 35.Rg4 Bd6 36.Kf1 Be5 37.Ke1 Rh8 38.f4 gxf4 39.Nxf4 Bc6 40.Ne2 Rh1+ 41.Kd2 Rh2 42.g3 Bf3 43.Rg8 Rg2 44.Ke1 Bxe2 45.Bxe2 Rxc3 46.Ra8 Bc7 0-1

### 5.26.4 See also

- **Hypermodernism (chess)**

### 5.26.5 References

#### Notes

- [1] **Karpov–Miles** game at [ChessGames.com](#)
- [2] **Karpov–Miles** game commentary

#### Bibliography

- **Michael Basman** (1982). *Play the St. George*. Pergamon chess openings. ISBN 0-08-029718-8.
- **Eric Schiller** (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. p. 32. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.
- **Benjamin, Joel; Schiller, Eric** (1987). "St George". *Unorthodox Openings*. Macmillan Publishing Company. pp. 44–49. ISBN 0-02-016590-0.

### 5.26.6 External links

- Includes a fairly indepth analysis
- [Chessdatabase](#)
- [article and game collection](#)

## Chapter 6

# d4 Openings

### 6.1 Queen's Pawn Game

In the most general sense the term **Queen's Pawn Game** can refer to any **chess opening** which starts with the move 1.d4. It is the second most popular opening move after 1.e4. The name is usually used to describe openings beginning with 1.d4 where White does not play the **Queen's Gambit**. The most common Queen's Pawn Game openings are:

- The **London System**, 2.Bf4 or 2.Nf3 and 3.Bf4
- The **Trompowsky Attack**, 1...Nf6 2.Bg5 and the **Pseudo-Trompowsky** 1...d5 2.Bg5
- The **Torre Attack**, 2.Nf3 and 3.Bg5
- The **Stonewall Attack**, 2.e3
- The **Colle System**, 2.Nf3 and 3.e3,
- The **Kingside Fianchetto**, 2.Nf3 and 3.g3
- The **Barry Attack**, 1...Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bf4
- The **Richter-Veresov Attack**, 1...d5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bg5 or 1...Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Bg5
- The **Blackmar–Diemer Gambit**, 1...d5 2.e4, and the **Hübsch Gambit** 1...Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.e4

In the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* (ECO), strict Queen's Pawn Games (1.d4 d5) are classified in the coding series D00–D05. Other openings where Black does not play 1...d5 are named **Semi-Closed Games** and classified as:

- **Indian Defenses**, where Black plays 1...Nf6 (ECO coding series A45–A79, D70–D99, E00–E99); for instance E12–E19 **Queen's Pawn: Indian**;
- other Queen's Pawn Games, where Black plays neither 1...d5 nor 1...Nf6; these include the **Dutch Defence** (ECO coding series A40–A44, A80–A99).

#### 6.1.1 History

In the 19th century and early 20th century, 1.e4 was by far the most common opening move by White (Watson 2006:87), while the different openings starting with 1.d4 were considered somewhat unusual and therefore classed together as “Queen's Pawn Game”.

As the merits of 1.d4 started to be explored, it was the **Queen's Gambit** which was played most often—more popular than all other 1.d4 openings combined. The term “Queen's Pawn Game” was then narrowed down to any opening with 1.d4 which was not a Queen's Gambit. Eventually, through the efforts of the **hypermodernists**, the various Indian Defences (such as the **King's Indian**, **Nimzo-Indian**, and **Queen's Indian**) became more popular, and as these openings were named, the term “Queen's Pawn Game” narrowed further.

#### 6.1.2 Continuations

##### 1...Nf6

This move prevents White from establishing a full pawn centre with 2.e4. The opening usually leads to a form of **Indian Defence**, but can also lead to versions of the Queen's Gambit if Black plays ...d5 at some point. Since 1...Nf6 is a move that is likely to be made anyway, the move is a flexible response to White's first move. White usually plays 2.c4. Then Black usually plays 2...e6 (typically leading to the **Nimzo-Indian**, **Queen's Indian**, or **Queen's Gambit Declined**), 2...g6 (leading to the **King's Indian** or **Grünfeld Defence**), or 2...c5 (leading to the **Benoni Defense** or **Benko Gambit**). Rarer tries include 2...e5 (**Budapest Gambit**) and 2...d6 (**Old Indian Defense**). Also White can play 2.Nf3 which like Black's move is not specific as to opening. A third alternative is the **Trompowsky Attack** with 2.Bg5.

**1...d5**

1...d5 (**Closed Game**) also prevents White from playing 2.e4 unless White wants to venture the dubious **Blackmar-Diemer Gambit**. 1...d5 is not any worse than 1...Nf6, but committing the pawn to d5 at once makes it somewhat less flexible since Black can no longer play the Indian Defenses, although if Black is aiming for Queen's Gambit positions this may be of minor importance. Also, a move like 2.Bg5 (**Hodgson Attack**) is considered relatively harmless compared to 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 since there is no knight on f6 for the bishop to harass. White's more common move is 2.c4 leading to the **Queen's Gambit** when Black usually chooses between 2...e6 (**Queen's Gambit Declined**), 2...c6 (**Slav Defense**) or 2...dxc4 (**Queen's Gambit Accepted**). Also White can play 2.Nf3 which again is not specific as to opening. Then Black may play ...Nf6 (same as above) or ...e6. A Queen's Gambit may arise anyway if White plays c4 soon afterward, but lines like the **Colle System** and **Stonewall Attack** are also possible.

**1...e6**

This move allows White to play 2.e4, entering the **French Defense**. If White wants to continue with a Queen's Pawn Game however, 2.c4 and 2.Nf3 usually transpose to a familiar opening such as the **Queen's Gambit Declined**, **Nimzo-Indian** or **Queen's Indian**. A line that is unique to the 1...e6 move order is the **Kangaroo Defense**, 1.d4 e6 2.c4 Bb4+.

**1...f5**

1...f5 is the **Dutch Defence**. Common White moves are 2.g3, 2.Nf3, and 2.c4.

**1...g6**

1...g6 is sometimes called the *Modern Defence* line. White can play 2.e4 to enter the Modern Defense. More commonly, White plays 2.c4. Black may play 2...Nf6 for the **King's Indian Defence** (same as 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6). More commonly, Black plays 2...Bg7. Then White's moves include 3.Nc3, 3.e4, and 3.Nf3. 3.Nc3 often leads to the Modern Defense, Averbakh System, and 3.e4 usually leads to the Modern Defense, Averbakh System. 2...d6 often leads to the Modern Defense, Averbakh System. Also, White can play 2.Nf3. Black may play 2...Nf6 for the **King's Indian**. More commonly, Black plays 2...Bg7. Common White moves are 3.e4, 3.c4, and 3.g3.

**1...d6**

This move also allows 2.e4 entering the **Pirc Defense**. If White avoids this, 2.Nf3 or 2.c4 may lead to a **King's Indian** or **Old Indian Defense**, or Black may play 2...Bg4 for **Queen's Pawn Game** (with ...d6) (A41, see 1.d4 d6 2.Nf3 Bg4).

**6.1.3 Other continuations**

- 1...b5 (**Polish Defense**)
- 1...c5 (**Old Benoni Defense**)
- 1...e5 (**Englund Gambit**)

**6.1.4 See also**

- **List of chess openings**

**6.1.5 References**

- Watson, John (2006), *Mastering the Chess Openings, vol 1*, Gambit, ISBN 978-1-904600-60-2

**6.2 Closed Game**

A **Closed Game** (or **Double Queen's Pawn Opening**) is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 d5

The move 1.d4 offers the same benefits to development and center control as does 1.e4, but unlike with the **King Pawn openings** where the e4 pawn is undefended after the first move, the d4 pawn is protected by White's queen. This slight difference has a tremendous effect on the opening. For instance, whereas the **King's Gambit** is rarely played today at the highest levels of chess, the **Queen's Gambit** remains popular at all levels of play. Also, compared with the King Pawn openings, **transpositions** between variations are more common and important in the closed games.

**6.2.1 Specific openings**

White's formation in the Colle system

The **Richter-Veresov Attack**, **Colle System**, **Stonewall Attack**, **Torre Attack**, **London System**, and **Blackmar-Diemer Gambit** are classified as **Queen's Pawn Games** because

White plays d4 but not c4. The Richter-Veresov is rarely played at the top levels of chess. The Colle and Stonewall are both *Systems*, rather than specific opening variations. White develops aiming for a particular formation without great concern over how Black chooses to defend. Both these systems are popular with club players because they are easy to learn, but are rarely used by professionals because a well prepared opponent playing Black can equalize fairly easily. The Blackmar-Diemer Gambit is an attempt by White to open lines and obtain attacking chances. Most professionals consider it too risky for serious games, but it is popular with amateurs and in blitz chess.

Queen's Gambit after 2.c4

The most important closed openings are in the Queen's Gambit family (White plays 2.c4). The Queen's Gambit is somewhat misnamed, since White can always regain the offered pawn if desired. In the *Queen's Gambit Accepted*, Black plays ...dxc4, giving up the center for free development and the chance to try to give White an isolated queen pawn with a subsequent ...c5 and ...cxd4. White will get active pieces and possibilities for the attack. Black has two popular ways to decline the pawn, the Slav (2...c6) and the *Queen's Gambit Declined* (2...e6). Both of these moves lead to an immense forest of variations that can require a great deal of opening study to play well. Among the many possibilities in the Queen's Gambit Declined are the Orthodox Defense, Lasker Defense, the Cambridge Springs Defense, the Tartakower Variation, and the Tarrasch and Semi-Tarrasch Defenses.

Albin countergambit after 2...e5

Black replies to the Queen's Gambit other than 2...dxc4, 2...c6, and 2...e6 are uncommon. The Chigorin Defense (2...Nc6) is playable but rare. The Symmetrical Defense (2...c5) is the most direct challenge to Queen's Gambit theory — Can Black equalize by simply copying White's moves? Most opening theoreticians believe not, and consequently the Symmetrical Defense is not popular. The Baltic Defense (2...Bf5) takes the most direct solution to solving the problem of Black's queen bishop by developing it on the second move. Although it is not trusted by most elite players, it has not been refuted and some very strong grandmasters have played it. The Albin Countergambit (2...e5) is generally considered too risky for top-level tournament play. Similarly, the Marshall Defense (2...Nf6) is very rarely seen in grandmaster play, as most theoreticians consider it definitely inferior for Black.

## 6.2.2 List

- 1.d4 d5 Double Queen's Pawn Opening or Closed Game
- 1.d4 d5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bg5 Richter-Veresov Attack
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Queen's Gambit
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 Queen's Gambit Accepted (QGA)
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c5 Symmetrical Defense
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 Slav Defense
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6 Chigorin Defense
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 Albin Countergambit
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 Queen's Gambit Declined (QGD)
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Bf5 Baltic Defense
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nf6 Marshall Defense
- 1.d4 d5 2.e3 Stonewall Attack
- 1.d4 d5 2.e4 Blackmar-Diemer Gambit
- 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 Colle System
- 1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 London System
- 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 f5

## 6.2.3 See also

- Open Game (1.e4 e5)
- Semi-Open Game (1.e4 moves other than 1...e5)
- Semi-Closed Game (1.d4 moves other than 1...d5)
- Flank opening (1.c4, 1.Nf3, 1.f4, and others)
- Irregular chess opening

## 6.2.4 References

- De Firmian, Nick (1999), *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-14*, Random House Puzzles & Games, ISBN 0-8129-3084-3

## 6.3 Semi-Closed Game

A **Semi-Closed Game** (or **Semi-Closed Opening**) is a chess opening in which White plays 1.d4 but Black does not make the symmetrical reply 1...d5. (The openings starting 1.d4 d5 are the Closed Games.)

### 6.3.1 Important openings

Indian systems  
Dutch Defense  
Benoni Defense

By far the most important category of the semi-closed openings are the *Indian systems*, which begin 1.d4 Nf6. As these defenses have much in common and have a great deal more theory than all the remaining semi-closed openings put together, they are treated in a separate article; see *Indian defense* for details.

The third most common response to 1.d4 (after 1...Nf6 and 1...d5) is 1...e6. This move is sometimes used by players wishing to play the *Dutch Defense* (1.d4 f5) without allowing White the option of 2.e4!?, the *Staunton Gambit*. 1...e6 rarely has independent significance, usually transposing to another opening, e.g. the aforementioned *Dutch Defense* (2.c4 f5 or 2.Nf3 f5), *French Defense* (2.e4 d5), or *Queen's Gambit Declined* (2.c4 d5). Another possibility is 2.c4 Bb4+, the *Keres Defence* (also known as the *Kangaroo Defence*), which is fully playable, but also little independent significance, since it often transposes into the Dutch, *Nimzo-Indian*, or *Bogo-Indian*.

Other important responses to 1.d4 include the Dutch (1...f5) and the *Benoni Defense* (1...c5). The Dutch, an aggressive defense adopted for a time by World Champions *Alekhine* and *Botvinnik*, and played by both *Botvinnik* and challenger *David Bronstein* in their 1951 world championship match, is still played occasionally at the top level by *Short* and others. The *Benoni Defense* is also fairly common, and may become very wild if it develops into the *Modern Benoni*, though other variations are more solid.

1...d6 is reasonable, and may transpose to the *King's Indian Defense* (e.g. after 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 d6), *Grünfeld Defence* (e.g. after 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 d5), *Old Indian Defense* (e.g. after 2.Nf3 Nbd7 3.c4 e5 4.Nc3 Be7), *Pirc Defense* (2.e4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6), or even *Philidor's Defense* (e.g. 2.e4 Nf6 3.Nc3 Nbd7 4.Nf3 e5). The *Wade Defence*, a slightly offbeat but fully playable line, arises after 1...d6 2.Nf3 Bg4. Note that the plausible 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5?! dxe5 4.Qxd8+ Kxd8 scores less than 50% for White.

### 6.3.2 Uncommon openings

Polish Defense

The remaining semi-closed openings are uncommon. The *Polish Defense* has never been very popular but has been tried by *Spassky*, *Ljubojević*, and *Csom*, among others. The *Queen's Knight Defense* is an uncommon opening that often

transposes to the *Nimzowitsch Defence* after 1.d4 Nc6 2.e4 or the *Chigorin Defense* after 2.c4 d5, although it can lead to unique lines, for example after 1.d4 Nc6 2.d5 or 2.c4 e5. The *Englund Gambit* is a rare and dubious sacrifice.

### 6.3.3 List

- 1.d4 b5 *Polish Defense*
- 1.d4 c5 *Benoni Defense*
- 1.d4 Nc6 *Queen's Knight Defense*
- 1.d4 d6 *Wade Defence*
- 1.d4 e5 *Englund Gambit*
- 1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 *English Defense*
- 1.d4 e6 2.c4 Bb4+ *Keres Defence*
- 1.d4 Nf6 *Indian Systems* (this is an enormous category, treated separately)
- 1.d4 f5 *Dutch Defense*

### 6.3.4 See also

- *Open Game* (1.e4 e5)
- *Semi-Open Game* (1.e4 other)
- *Closed Game* (1.d4 d5)
- *Flank opening* (1.c4, 1.Nf3, 1.f4, and others)
- *Irregular chess opening*

### 6.3.5 References

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992), *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2 ed.), Oxford University, ISBN 0-19-280049-3
- De Firmian, Nick (1999), *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-14*, Random House Puzzles & Games, ISBN 0-8129-3084-3

## Chapter 7

# d4 Openings – Queen’s Gambit Openings

### 7.1 Queen’s Gambit

For the novel, see *The Queen’s Gambit* (novel).

The **Queen’s Gambit** is a chess opening that starts with the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4

The Queen’s Gambit is one of the oldest known chess openings. It was mentioned in the *Göttingen manuscript* of 1490 and was later analysed by masters such as *Gioachino Greco* in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century it was recommended by *Phillip Stamma*, and is sometimes known as the **Aleppo Gambit** in his honour. During the early period of modern chess, queen pawn openings were not in fashion, and the Queen’s Gambit did not become common until the 1873 tournament in Vienna.

As *Steinitz* and *Tarrasch* developed chess theory and increased the appreciation of positional play, the Queen’s Gambit grew more popular, reaching its zenith in the 1920s and 1930s, and was played in all but two of 34 games in the 1927 world championship match between *José Raúl Capablanca* and *Alexander Alekhine*.

After World War II, it was less frequently seen, as many Black players moved away from symmetrical openings, tending to use the *Indian Defences* to combat queen pawn openings.

The Queen’s Gambit is still frequently played and it remains an important part of many *grandmasters’* opening repertoires.

#### 7.1.1 Overview

With 2.c4, White threatens to **exchange** a wing pawn (the c-pawn) for a center pawn (Black’s d-pawn) and dominate

the center with e2–e4. This is not a true gambit, as Black cannot hold the pawn, for example: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 b5? (Black tries to guard his pawn but should pursue development with 3...e5!) 4.a4 c6? 5.axb5 cxb5?? 6.Qf3! winning a piece.

The Queen’s Gambit is divided into two major categories based on Black’s response: The **Queen’s Gambit Accepted** (QGA) and the **Queen’s Gambit Declined** (QGD). In the QGA, Black plays 2...dxc4, temporarily giving up the center to obtain freer development. In the QGD, Black usually plays to hold d5. Frequently Black will be cramped, but Black aims to exchange pieces and use the pawn breaks at c5 and e5 to free his game.

#### 7.1.2 Main variations

After 1.d4 d5 2.c4:

- 2...dxc4 (Queen’s Gambit Accepted) (QGA)
- 2...Nc6 (Chigorin Defense)
- 2...c5 (Symmetrical Defense)
- 2...c6 (Slav Defense)
- 2...e5 (Albin Countergambit)
- 2...e6 (Queen’s Gambit Declined) (QGD)
- 2...Bf5!? (Baltic Defense)
- 2...Nf6?! (Marshall Defense)
- 2...g6 (Alekhine’s Variation)

Technically, any Black response other than 2...dxc4 (or another line with an early ...dxc4 that transposes into the QGA) is a Queen’s Gambit Declined, but the Slav, Chigorin Defense, and Albin Counter Gambit are generally treated separately. There are so many QGD lines after 2...e6, that many of them are distinctive enough to warrant separate

treatment. The Orthodox Defense and the **Tarrasch Defense** are two important examples. See **Queen's Gambit Declined** for more.

There are many other possible responses:

- The **Slav Defense** is a solid response, although many variations are very tactical. If Black plays both ...c6 and ...e6 (in either order), the opening takes characteristics of both the Slav and the Orthodox Defense and is classified as a **Semi-Slav Defense**.
- The **Chigorin Defense** takes the game away from the normal positional channels of the QGD, and has been favoured by **Alexander Morozevich** at top level; it appears to be playable for Black.
- The **Albin Countergambit** is a sharp attempt for Black to gain the initiative. It is not common in top-level chess, but can be a dangerous weapon in club play.
- The **Symmetrical Defense** is very rarely played. Although it has not been definitely refuted, play seems to favor White.
- If White chooses to **fianchetto** his king's bishop, the game transposes into the **Catalan Opening**.
- The **Baltic Defense** is offbeat but playable.
- The **Marshall Defense** is the weakest of the Black replies listed. Named after **Frank Marshall**, who was the first to devise the move, he briefly played it in the 1920s before abandoning it.

### 7.1.3 Further reading

- Marović, Dražen (1992). *Play the Queen's Gambit*. Cadogan Books. ISBN 1-85744-016-1.
- Ward, Chris (2006). *Play The Queen's Gambit*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-411-6.
- Schandorff, Lars (2009). *Playing the Queen's Gambit: A Grandmaster Guide*. Quality Chess. ISBN 978-1-906552-18-3.
- Komarov, Dmitry; Djuric, Stefan; Pantaleoni, Claudio (2009). *Chess Opening Essentials, Vol. 2: 1.d4 d5 / 1.d4 various / Queen's Gambits*. New In Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-269-7.

### 7.1.4 External links

- “Queen's Gambit” video and explanation, TheChess-Website.com
- “Queen's Gambit Accepted Traps” video and explanation, Chessworld.net

## 7.2 Queen's Gambit Accepted

The **Queen's Gambit Accepted** (or **QGA**) is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 dxc4

The Queen's Gambit Accepted is the third most popular option on Black's second move, after 2...e6 (the **Queen's Gambit Declined**) and 2...c6 (the **Slav Defense**). In both of these variations, slow and subtle manoeuvres are often necessary to complete development. White will try to exploit an advantage in space and development, while Black will defend the position and aim for **queenside** counterplay.

The **Queen's Gambit** is not considered a true gambit, in contrast to the **King's Gambit**, because the pawn is either regained, or can only be held unprofitably by Black. Black will allow the pawn to be recaptured, and use the time expended to play against White's centre.

As Black's 2...dxc4 surrenders the centre, White will try to seize space in the centre and use it to launch an attack on Black's position. Black's game is not devoid of counterchances, however. If the white centre can be held at bay, Black will try to weaken White's centre pawns to gain an advantage in the ensuing **endgame** by playing ...c5 and ...cxd4 at some stage, and if White responds with exd4, the result will be an **isolated pawn** on d4 – which can also lead to a keen middlegame battle. If White recaptures with a piece at d4 instead, the centre will be liquidated and a fairly even game will usually ensue.

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) classifies the Queen's Gambit Accepted under codes D20 to D29.

### 7.2.1 History

While the Queen's Gambit Accepted was mentioned in literature as long ago as the 15th century, it was the **World Chess Championship 1886** between **Wilhelm Steinitz** and **Johannes Zukertort** which introduced the first modern ideas in this opening. Black's play had, until then, centred on holding on to the c4-pawn. Steinitz's plan was to return the pawn, but inflict White with an **isolated pawn** on d4, then play to exploit the weakness.

Even with the modern treatment, the opening suffered from a slightly dubious reputation in the early 20th century, even as **Alexander Alekhine** introduced further ideas for Black and it was played at the highest levels, beginning in the 1930s, though becoming less popular after World War II, as the **Indian Defenses** were heavily played. At the end of the 1990s, a number of players among the world elite included

the Queen's Gambit Accepted in their repertoires, and the line is currently considered sound.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 7.2.2 Main variations

After 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4, the most popular move is 3.Nf3, but there are other moves which have been played by strong grandmasters. The main variations below are in order of popularity.

#### 3.Nf3

The main lines of the QGA begin with this move. White delays measures to regain the pawn for the moment and prevents Black from striking at the centre with ...e5. The recovery of the pawn will usually be done through 4.e3 and 5.Bxc4. Black's most common rejoinder is 3...Nf6, though the variation 3...a6 was introduced by **Alexander Alekhine** and bears his name.

Main line after 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.Bxc4 c5 6.0-0 a6

The main line of the Queen's Gambit Accepted continues with:

#### 3... Nf6 4. e3

4.Qa4+ leads to the Mannheim Variation, so named after its adoption in one of the cities where the **World Chess Championship 1934** was played, even though the move was previously known. Black usually gains easy equality after 4...Nc6, so the line is fairly rare. Grandmasters **Michał Krasenkow** and **Ulf Andersson** have played the line several times.<sup>[2]</sup>

4.Nc3 leads to the Two Knights Variation, which is a true gambit line since White can no longer expect to regain the c4-pawn after 4...a6 5.e4 b5. White's compensation in the form of a strong centre leads to immensely complicated play. Black does not need to enter this line, and 4...Nc6, 4...e6, and 4...c6 tend to transpose to the **Chigorin Defense**, **QGD Vienna Variation**, and **Slav Defense** respectively.<sup>[2]</sup>

#### 4... e6

An alternative is 4...Bg4 5.Bxc4 e6, usually leading to a solid position, though the game can become sharp if White immediately attempts to exploit the weakness of Black's queenside in the line 6.Qb3 Bxf3 7.gxf3 Nd7 as Black gains great

piece activity and spoils White's kingside pawns in return for sacrificing a pawn.<sup>[1]</sup>

#### 5. Bxc4 c5 6. 0-0

A major alternative to castling is 6.Qe2, called the **Furman Variation** after **Semion Furman**. The idea behind 6.Qe2 is to support the advance of the e-pawn.<sup>[2]</sup>

#### 6... a6

6...cxd4 brings about an isolated queen's pawn structure, and has been called the **Steinitz Variation**, after **Wilhelm Steinitz**. This line became well known after his match with **Zukertort** in 1886, but theory has generally held White's activity in high regard. The early clarification of the central tension gives White too free a hand and the line is rarely seen in modern practice.<sup>[1]</sup>

Black has played to challenge the d4-pawn, and prepare ...b5 which wins time by harassing the bishop on c4. In the meantime, White has safeguarded his king and regained the pawn. At this point, there are several options available for White, who needs to consider whether or not to deal with the positional threat of ...b5. The old main line 7.Qe2 allows ...b5, and theory holds that Black can equalise against it. The main modern preference is the retreat 7.Bb3, so that 7...b5 can be met with 8.a4, while 7.a4, stopping ...b5 at the cost of weakening the b4-square, is also popular, and was played by **Mikhail Botvinnik** in his 1963 match with **Tigran Petrosian**.<sup>[1]</sup> 7.dxc5 leads to an early queen exchange, and often to an early draw. Rarer lines which have been played are 7.e4 (**Geller**), 7.Nc3, 7.Nbd2, 7.a3, 7.b3, and 7.Bd3.<sup>[2]</sup>

**3...a6** This is the **Alekhine Variation**. White usually continues 4.e3. 4...Nf6 tends to return to the main line.

#### 3.e4

White can try to establish a strong pawn centre with 3.e4, an old move that has become popular again in the last decade. It is called the **Central Variation** by **Rizzitano**, who notes its increase in popularity and strategic and tactical complexity.<sup>[2]</sup> **Raetsky** and **Chetverik** consider the line straightforward and critical, and remark that anyone playing the Queen's Gambit Accepted must be prepared to meet it.<sup>[1]</sup>

Trying to protect the pawn with 3...b5 is fairly risky and rarely seen.<sup>[1]</sup> The main reply against the Central Variation is to oppose the pawn centre with 3...e5, which is a highly theoretical system. Other replies aimed at challenging the centre are 3...Nc6 with ideas akin to the **Chigorin Defense**, 3...Nf6, provoking 4.e5, and 3...c5 undermining the centre at d4.

### 3.e3

The apparently modest 3.e3 prepares immediate recovery of the pawn and has often been employed by strong players, including **Anatoly Karpov**. The line long had a harmless reputation due to the early discovery of 3...e5 which strikes back at the centre. A typical continuation is then 4.Bxc4 exd4 5.exd4, leading to an isolated queen's pawn position. However, the open positions which ensue have not proved easy for Black to handle in practice, and many players simply play 3...e6 to **transpose** back to the main lines.<sup>[1]</sup> Nonetheless, 3...e5 was Rizzitano's recommendation in his repertoire against 3.e3.<sup>[2]</sup>

An opening trap where Black tries clinging onto the c4-pawn was pointed out by **Alessandro Salvio** in 1604. If Black defends the pawn with 3...b5? 4.a4 c6 5.axb5 cxb5??, the a8–h1 diagonal has been fatally weakened and 6.Qf3 wins a **minor piece**. Trying to defend the pawn by 3...Be6 may hold on to the pawn, but White has good compensation after 4.Ne2.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 3.Nc3

3. Nc3 was labelled “misguided” by Raetsky and Chetverik, because the development does not control d4 and e5, and the knight is vulnerable to a b-pawn advance from Black. 3...e5, 3...Nf6, and 3...a6 are all reasonable replies,<sup>[1]</sup> and 3...Nc6 leads to a standard line in the **Chigorin Defense**. 3. Nc3 was recommended by **Keene** and **Jacobs** in their opening repertoire for white players.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 3.Qa4+

The queen check by 3.Qa4+ Nc6 4.Nf3 will quickly regain the pawn with Qxc4, but the early development of the queen allows Black to win time by harassing it, so this line is rarely played.<sup>[2]</sup>

## 7.2.3 References

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- [2] Rizzitano, James (2005). *How to Beat 1 d4. Gambit*. p. 160. ISBN 1-904600-33-6.

- [3] Keene, Raymond; Jacobs, Byron (1995). *An Opening Repertoire for White*. Batsford. p. 144. ISBN 978-0-7134-7817-4.

## 7.2.4 Further reading

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## 7.2.5 External links

- [Annotated Chess - Queen's Gambit Accepted](#)

## 7.3 Queen's Gambit Declined

The **Queen's Gambit Declined** (or **QGD**) is a chess opening in which Black declines a pawn offered by White in the **Queen's Gambit**:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 e6

This is known as the *Orthodox Line* of the Queen's Gambit Declined.<sup>[1]</sup> When the “Queen's Gambit Declined” is mentioned, it is usually assumed to be referring to the Orthodox Line; see “Other lines” below.

The Orthodox Line can be reached by a number of different **move orders**, such as 1.d4 e6 2.c4 d5; 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5; 1.c4 e6 2.Nc3 d5 3.d4; 1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.d4; and so on.

### 7.3.1 General concepts

Playing 2...e6 releases Black's dark-squared **bishop**, while obstructing his light-squared bishop. By declining White's temporary **pawn** sacrifice, Black erects a solid position; the pawns on d5 and e6 give Black a foothold in the center. The Queen's Gambit Declined has the reputation of being one of Black's most reliable defenses to 1.d4. In this situation, White will try to exploit the passivity of Black's light-squared bishop, and Black will try to release it, trade it, or prove that, while passive, the bishop has a useful defensive role.

An eventual ...dxc4 by Black will surrender the **center** to White, and Black will usually not do this unless he can extract a concession, usually in the form of gaining a **tempo**, by capturing on c4 only after White has played Bd3 first. In the Orthodox Line, the fight for the tempo revolves around White's efforts to play all other useful developing moves prior to playing Bd3.

### 7.3.2 Other lines

In its broadest sense, the Queen's Gambit Declined is any variation of the Queen's Gambit in which Black does not play ...dxc4. Variations other than the Orthodox Line have their own names and are usually treated separately.<sup>[2]</sup>

- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 – **Slav Defense**
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6 – **Chigorin Defense**
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 – **Albin Countergambit**
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Bf5 – **Baltic Defense**
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nf6 – **Marshall Defense** (unsound and no longer used by knowledgeable players)
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c5 – **Symmetrical Defense** (or **Austrian Defense**)
- 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 and eventual ...c6 – **Semi-Slav Defense**

Of the 34 games played in the 1927 World Championship between Alexander Alekhine and José Raúl Capablanca, all except the first and third began with the Queen's Gambit Declined.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 7.3.3 Black avoids 3...Nf6

After **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3** (other third moves are also possible: 3.cxd5 may be played to lead to the Exchange line, 3.Nf3 keeps options open, and 3.g3 will transpose to the **Catalan**), Black's main move is 3...Nf6, though he has other options as well:

- **3...c6** now the **Semi-Slav Defense** may be reached via 4.Nf3 Nf6, though 4.e4 dxe4 5.Nxe4 Bb4+ 6.Bd2 (6.Nc3 c5 gives little) 6...Qxd4 7.Bxb4 Qxe4+ 8.Be2 leads to a sharp struggle, and 4.Nf3 dxc4 is the **Noteboom Variation**, also sometimes known as the **Abrahams Variation**, after the English master, **Gerald Abrahams**.
- If Black is willing to accept an **isolated d-pawn** he can play **3...c5**. This leads to a variation of the QGD called the **Tarrasch Defense**.
- **3...Be7**, the **Alatortsev Variation**.<sup>[4]</sup> At top level, this has recently been played much more often than Nf6. Sometimes, this transposes to positions arising from 3...Nf6, and has the advantage, from Black's standpoint, of avoiding the insidious pressure of the main lines in the Exchange Variation arising after 3...Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bg5 with an annoying pin. In many cases, the game will simply transpose into the main lines after 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.Bg5, or, White can now play **4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bf4 c6 6.e3**, when 6...Bf5 7.g4 became a topical line after its adoption by **Mikhail Botvinnik** in his 1963 title match with **Tigran Petrosian**. 6. Qc2 is also popular. These exchange lines are more popular than transposing at top level. Also, Be7 is generally agreed to be more accurate than Nf6.
- **3...Bb4?!** confusing a **Nimzo-Indian** with a Queen's Gambit (also known as the **Berg defense**), and at this point an inaccuracy. White has at least two good continuations: 4.Qa4+ Nc6 5.Nf3 where Black is forced to block the c-pawn with the knight, and 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 and White has the bishop pair almost for free (on the average worth half a pawn), since cxd5 is unstoppable and there will be no doubled pawns as a counterbalance.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 7.3.4 Black plays 3...Nf6

Lines beginning with the moves **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6** are covered by ECO codes D35–D69. These are old lines that can **transpose** into many other queen pawn openings. White has several ways of dealing with Black's setup:

**QGD Main Variations: 4.Bg5 Be7 5.Nf3**

Main Line of the QGD: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.Nf3

- **Tartakower Defense** or **Tartakower–Makogonov–Bondarevsky System (TMB system): 5...h6 6.Bh4 0-0 7.e3 b6**, is one of the most solid continuations for Black.
- **Anti-Tartakower–Makogonov–Bondarevsky (Anti-TMB): 5...h6 6.Bxf6 Bxf6** this line was extensively tested in the Kasparov–Karpov matches in 1980s. To this day Black has no problems in this line despite being tested at the highest levels. Most recently Boris Gelfand defended the Black side of this variation in the 2011 candidates matches which eventually he went on to win. For example in the third round of the final candidate match he forced White to accept a draw in 14 moves with a very strong novelty: **Grischuk vs Gelfand, Elista 2011**
- **Lasker Defense: 5...0-0 6.e3 h6 7.Bh4 Ne4 8.Bxe7 Qxe7**, is also a solid line, often leading to the exchange of two sets of minor pieces. It was this line that **Viswanathan Anand** chose in the final game of the **World Chess Championship 2010** in order to defeat **Veselin Topalov** and retain the world championship.
- **Orthodox Defense: 5...0-0 6.e3 Nbd7 7.Rc1 c6** and now White has two main moves: 8.Bd3 and 8.Qc2. After 8.Bd3 dxc4 9.Bxc4 Black has surrendered the center and stands somewhat cramped, but has succeeded in making White lose a tempo by playing Bd3 before Bxc4. White will try to use his advantage in space to attack, whereas Black will try to keep White at bay while striking back at the center. Capablanca's main idea here was the freeing maneuver 9...Nd5 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.0-0 Nxc3 12.Rxc3 e5 13.dxe5 Nxe5 14.Nxe5 Qxe5 15.f4 Qe7, which has led to a number of exchanges in the center, though Black must exercise care even in the wake of this simplification. This line was once so frequently played that it has a separate code (D69) in ECO, though the lack of active counter play for Black has made the main line of the Orthodox a backwater in modern practice.<sup>[6]</sup>

**Cambridge Springs Defense: 4.Bg5 Nbd7**

The **Cambridge Springs Defense** was introduced more than a century ago, and is still played. **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Nbd7** (setting up the **Elephant Trap**) **5.e3 c6 6.Nf3 Qa5**, now Black intends ...Bb4 and possibly ...Ne4, with pressure along the a5–e1 diagonal. This

Black defense is popular among amateurs because there are several traps White can fall into, for example **7.Nd2** (one of the main lines, countering Black's pressure along the diagonal) **7...Bb4 8.Qc2 0-0** and here 9.Bd3?? loses since 9...dxc4! (threatening ...Qxg5) 10.Bxf6 cxd3! (a *zwischenzug*) 11.Qxd3 Nxf6 wins a piece for Black.

**Exchange Variation: 4.cxd5 exd5**

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bg5 c6 6.Qc2** and White has a pawn majority in the center, Black has a pawn majority on the *queenside*. This pawn structure gives White the opportunity to either advance his pawns in the center by means of Nge2, f2–f3, followed by e2–e4, or play for a *minority attack* by means of the plan Rb1, followed by b2–b4–b5, then bxc6 in order to create a weak pawn at c6. While Black can play ...cxb5, or recapture on c6 with a piece, each of these possibilities are even less desirable than the *backward pawn* in the open file. For Black, exchanging at d5 has released his light-squared bishop and opened the e-file, giving him the use of e4 as a springboard for central and kingside play. While chances are balanced, Black is usually more or less forced to use his superior activity to launch a piece attack on White's *king*, as the long-term chances in the QGD Exchange structure favour White. The following games are model games for White:

- Central Pawn Advance: **Carlsen vs Jakovenko, Nanjing 2009**
- Minority attack: **Evans vs Opsahl, Dubrovnik 1950.**

**Ragozin Variation: 4.Nf3 Bb4**

The Ragozin Variation (ECO code D37–D39) occurs after **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 Bb4**. An important line in this variation is the Vienna variation where the game continues: **5.Bg5 dxc4 6.e4**. White's pawns or pieces occupy the central squares in exchange for long-term pawn structure weaknesses. An instance of Vienna variation played at the highest level was **Fine vs Euwe, AVRO 1938**.

**7.3.5 See also**

- **Queen's Gambit**
- **Queen's Gambit Accepted**

**7.3.6 References**

- [1] ChessOps - QGAM-03A
- [2] ChessOps - The Queen's Gambit - Overview

- [3] “WCC Index [Alekhine-Capablanca 1927]”. Chess-games.com. Retrieved 2009-04-13.
- [4] ECO D31 QGD: Alartortsev Variation
- [5] Heisman, Dan (2006-03-15). “The Most Common Opening Inaccuracies” (PDF). The Chess Cafe. Retrieved 2009-11-16.
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## 7.4 Cambridge Springs Defense

In chess, the **Cambridge Springs Defense** (or less commonly, the **Pillsbury Variation**) is a variation of the Queen’s Gambit Declined and begins with the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 Nf6
4. Bg5 Nbd7
5. Nf3 c6
6. e3 Qa5

Black breaks the pin on the h4–d8 diagonal and forms a pin of his own on the c3 knight (exploiting the absence of the White’s queen bishop from the queenside). If Black later plays dxc4, there may be threats against the g5-bishop. Note that 5.cxd5 cannot win a pawn because of the **Elephant Trap**. The main line continues 7.Nd2 Bb4 with the threat of ...Ne4 and pressure along the a5–e1 diagonal.

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) code is D52.

### 7.4.1 Background

The first recorded use of the Cambridge Springs was by Emanuel Lasker in 1892. The name derives from a 1904 tournament in Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania in which the defense was used several times. Practitioners of the opening have included Efim Bogoljubov, Vasily Smyslov, and Garry Kasparov.

The line remains popular among amateurs because there are several traps White must avoid. For example, 7.Nd2 Bb4 8.Qc2 0-0 9.Bd3?? dxc4! (threatening ...Qxg5) 10.Bxf6 cxd3! (a *zwischenzug*) 11.Qxd3 Nxf6 and Black has won a piece.

### 7.4.2 Continuations

White has several choices on his seventh move. The most common are:

- 7.Nd2 (the main line) immediately breaks the pin on the c3 knight and defends e4; 7...Bb4 is answered by 8.Qc2, defending the c3 knight and covering e4.
- 7.cxd5 avoids complications by clarifying the situation in the center. Black’s strongest is the recapture 7...Nxd5, continuing the attack on c3.
- 7.Bxf6 avoids tactics involving discovered attacks on the g5-bishop.

### 7.4.3 Representative games

- Capablanca vs. Alekhine, Buenos Aires, World Championship Match, 1927:<sup>[1]</sup>  
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Nbd7 5.e3 c6 6.Nf3 Qa5 7.Nd2 Bb4 8.Qc2 dxc4 9.Bxf6 Nxf6 10.Nxc4 Qc7 11.a3 Be7 12.Be2 0-0 13.0-0 Bd7 14.b4 b6 15.Bf3 Rac8 16.Rfd1 Rfd8 17.Rac1 Be8 18.g3 Nd5 19.Nb2 Qb8 20.Nd3 Bg5 21.Rb1 Qb7 22.e4 Nxc3 23.Qxc3 Qe7 24.h4 Bh6 25.Ne5 g6 26.Ng4 Bg7 27.e5 h5 28.Ne3 c5 29.bxc5 bxc5 30.d5 exd5 31.Nxd5 Qe6 32.Nf6+ Bxf6 33.exf6 Rxd1+ 34.Rxd1 Bc6 35.Re1 Qf5 36.Re3 c4 37.a4 a5 38.Bg2 Bxg2 39.Kxg2 Qd5+

40.Kh2 Qf5 41.Rf3 Qc5 42.Rf4 Kh7 43.Rd4 Qc6 44.Qxa5 c3 45.Qa7 Kg8 46.Qe7 Qb6 47.Qd7 Qc5 48.Re4 Qxf2+ 49.Kh3 Qf1+ 50.Kh2 Qf2+ 51.Kh3 Rf8 52.Qc6 Qf1+ 53.Kh2 Qf2+ 54.Kh3 Qf1+ 55.Kh2 Kh7 56.Qc4 Qf2+ 57.Kh3 Qg1 58.Re2 Qf1+ 59.Kh2 Qxf6 60.a5 Rd8 61.a6 Qf1 62.Qe4 Rd2 63.Rxd2 cxd2 64.a7 d1=Q 65.a8=Q Qg1+ 66.Kh3 Qdf1+ 0–1 (67.Qg2 Qh1#)

- Gelfand vs. Carlsen, London, World Chess Championship Candidates Tournament, 2013:<sup>[2]</sup>  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 Nbd7 5.Bg5 c6 6.e3 Qa5 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Rc1 Nxc3 9.bxc3 Ba3 10.Rc2 b6 11.Bd3 Ba6 12.O-O Bxd3 13.Qxd3 O-O 14.e4 Rfe8 15.e5 h6 16.Bh4 c5 17.Nd2 cxd4 18.cxd4 Rac8 19.Nc4 Qb5 20.f4 Rc7 21.Qxa3 Rxc4 22.Rxc4 Qxc4 23.Bf2 Qc7 24.Rc1 Qb7 25.Qd6 Nf8 26.g3 Rc8 27.Rxc8 Qxc8 28.d5 exd5 29.Qxd5 g6 30.Kg2 Ne6 31.Qf3 Kg7 32.a3 h5 33.h4 Qc2 34.Qb7 Qa4 35.Qf3 b5 36.f5 gxf5 37.Qxf5 Qxa3 38.Qxh5 a5 39.Qg4+ Kf8 40.h5 Qc1 41.Qe4 b4 42.Be3 Qc7 43.Qa8+ Kg7 44.h6+ Kh7 45.Qe4+ Kg8 46.Qa8+ Qd8 47.Qxd8+ Nxd8 48.Kf3 a4 49.Ke4 Nc6 50.Bc1 Na5 51.Bd2 b3 52.Kd3 Nc4 53.Bc3 a3 54.g4 Kh7 55.g5 Kg6 56.Bd4 b2 57.Kc2 Nd2 0–1

## 7.4.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

## 7.4.5 References

- [1] Capablanca vs. Alekhine  
[2] Gelfand vs. Carlsen

## Bibliography

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## 7.4.6 Further reading

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## 7.4.7 External links

- Cambridge Springs Defense
- 4 Annotated World Championship Games in the Cambridge Springs

## 7.5 Tarrasch Defense

The **Tarrasch Defense** is a chess opening characterized by the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 c5

The Tarrasch is a variation of the **Queen's Gambit Declined**.

With his third move, Black makes an aggressive bid for central space. After White plays cxd5 and dxc5, Black will be left with an isolated pawn on d5. Such a pawn may be weak, since it can no longer be defended by other pawns; but it grants Black a foothold in the center, and Black's bishops will have unobstructed lines for development.

The opening was advocated by the German master Siegbert Tarrasch, who contended that the increased mobility Black enjoys is well worth the inherent weakness of the isolated center pawn. Although many other masters, after the teachings of Wilhelm Steinitz, rejected the Tarrasch Defense out of hand because of the pawn weakness, Tarrasch continued to play his opening while rejecting other variations of the Queen's Gambit, even to the point of putting question marks on routine moves in all variations except the Tarrasch (which he awarded an exclamation mark) in his book *Die moderne Schachpartie*. (See chess punctuation.)

The Tarrasch Defense is considered sound. Even if Black fails to make use of his mobility and winds up in an inferior endgame, tied to the defense of his isolated pawn, he may be able to hold the draw if he defends accurately.

In the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings*, the Tarrasch Defense has codes D32 through D34.

### 7.5.1 Main line: 4. cxd5 exd5 5. Nf3 Nc6 6. g3 Nf6

4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.g3 Nf6 7.Bg2 Be7 8.O-O O-O

In the main line, White will isolate Black's queen pawn with 4. cxd5 exd5 and attempt to exploit its weakness. The most common setup is to fianchetto his king's bishop in order to

put pressure on the isolated d5-pawn, as 3...c5 has relinquished the possibility of protecting the point d5 by means of ...c6.

After 4.cxd5, Black may offer the Hennig-Schara Gambit with 4...cxd4. While this was once essayed by Alekhine, it has never achieved popularity at master level and is considered good for White.

On his third move White often plays 3.Nf3 instead (in part to avoid the Hennig-Schara), which after 3...c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nc3 transposes to the main line.

### 7. Bg2 Be7 8. 0-0 0-0

In modern praxis, 9.Bg5 is most frequently played here, though there are other ideas of note, 9.dxc5 and 9.b3 being the main alternatives. (Other lines are 9.Be3, 9.Bf4, and 9.a3.)

## 7.5.2 Swedish Variation

Swedish Variation: 6...c4

The *Swedish Variation* (also called the *Folkestone Variation*) is a sharp line beginning 6... c4. Black now has a four to three queenside pawn majority, and will try to expand with ...b5, with White aiming for a central break with e4. The line is considered somewhat dubious, and is rarely seen nowadays.

The Swedish Variation has ECO code D33.

### 7.5.3 See also

- Semi-Tarrasch Defense
- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

## 7.5.4 References

- Colins, Sam (2005), *Understanding the Chess Openings*, Gambit Publications, ISBN 1-904600-28-X
- de Firmian, Nick (2008), *Modern Chess Openings* (15th ed.), McKay, ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7

## 7.5.5 External links

- Opening Report (on the Marshall variation): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.e4 (105 games) (in Italian)

## 7.6 Marshall Defense

The **Marshall Defense** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 Nf6?!

The Marshall Defense is a fairly dubious variation of the *Queen's Gambit Declined*. It was played by Frank Marshall in the 1920s, but he gave it up after losing with it to Alekhine at Baden-Baden in 1925.<sup>[1]</sup> It is no longer used by experienced players (Watson 2007:12–14).

White may choose to ignore Black's provocative second move with 3.Nc3, which will usually transpose into normal lines of the *Queen's Gambit Declined* (after 3...e6), the *Slav Defence* (after 3...c6), the *Queen's Gambit Accepted* (after 3...dxc4) or the *Grünfeld Defence* (after 3...g6).

### 7.6.1 3.cxd5 Nxd5 4.e4

A common continuation, though White may be playing e4 too early. If Black deviates with 3...Qxd5, 4.Nc3 Qa5 5.Bd2 is strong, e.g. 5...Qb6 6.Nf3 Qxb2?? 7.Rb1 Qa3 8.Nb5, winning (Alburt 2009:38).

After Black retreats the knight with 4...Nf6, White can continue 5.e5 attacking the knight, or he can get a clear advantage with 5.f3, or a small advantage with 5.Nc3 e5! 6.Nf3! (6.dxe5 Qxd1+ 7.Kxd1 Ng4!<sup>[2]</sup>) 6...exd4! 7.Qxd4 (Alburt 2009:38).

### 7.6.2 4.Nf3!

This is most accurate, threatening 5.e4. After 4...Bf5, White achieves a large advantage with 5.Qb3 e6 (5...Nc6 6.Nbd2! Nb6 7.e4 Bg6 8.d5 is very strong) 6.Nc3 (avoiding the complications of 6.Qxb7 Nd7; 6.Nbd2 is also good) 6...Nc6 7.e4 Nxc3 8.exf5 Nd5 9.a3 (avoiding 9.Qxb7 Bb4+) Qd6 10.Qxb7 Rb8 11.Qa6 Be7 12.Bb5 Rb6 13.Bxc6 Rxc6 14.Qd3 exf5 15.0-0 0-0 16.Qxf5, as in Lipnitsky–Bondarevsky, USSR championship 1951.<sup>[3]</sup> White also achieves a “pleasant advantage” with 5.Nbd2 Nf6 6.Qb3 Qc8 7.g3 (Benjamin).

### 7.6.3 3.cxd5 c6 4.dxc6 Nxc6

Black can play a gambit line where Black generally follows up with ...e5, causing a pawn exchange in the center and the removal of the queens. White retains a small advantage in the queenless middlegame that follows.

## 7.6.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

## 7.6.5 Notes

- [1] ChessGames.com. “Alekhine–Marshall, Baden-Baden 1925”. ChessGames.com. Retrieved 2010-02-08.
- [2] However, opening database Chessok.com gives 8.Nh3! +.48 denying equality for Black.
- [3] ChessGames.com. “Lipnitsky–Bondarevsky, Moscow 1951”. ChessGames.com. Retrieved 13 September 2015.

## 7.6.6 References

- Alburt, Lev (October 2009). “Time, Anyone?”. *Chess Life*. p. 38.
- Benjamin, Joel. “GM Joel on the Marshall Defense”. Chess Life Online (United States Chess Federation). Retrieved 2010-02-08.
- Watson, John (2007), *Mastering the Chess Openings, Volume 2*, Gambit Publications, ISBN 978-1-904600-69-5

## 7.7 Baltic Defense

For the Baltic Opening (1.Nc3), see [Dunst Opening](#).

The **Baltic Defense** (also known as the **Grau Defense**, or the **Sahovic Defense**) is a chess opening characterized by the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 Bf5!?

The Baltic is an unusual variation of the [Queen’s Gambit Declined](#) (QGD). In most defenses to the QGD, Black has difficulties developing his queen bishop. This opening takes a radical approach to the problem by bringing out the queen bishop immediately.

The Baltic has not found widespread acceptance among chess masters, but some world-class players have used it including grandmasters Paul Keres and Alexei Shirov.

The ECO code for the Baltic Defense is D06.

## 7.7.1 White responses

White has a number of replies to this opening, including 3.Nf3, 3.Qb3, 3.cxd5, and 3.Nc3. Play might continue:

### 3.Nf3 e6

- 4.Qb3 Nc6
- 4.e3 Nf6 5.Qb3 Nc6
- 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.Qb3 Nc6
- 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Qb3 Nc6

### 3.Qb3

3...e5 4.Qxb7 Nd7 5.Nf3 Rb8 6.Qxd5 Bb4+ 7.Nfd2 (7.Bd2?? Ne7—+ Webb–Sinclair, England 1971) Ne7 8.Qf3 exd4 and Black has development and initiative for his pawn

### 3.cxd5 (Main Line)

3...Bxb1 4.Qa4+ Qd7 5.Qxd7+ Nxd7 6.Rxb1 Ngf6 7.Nf3

### 3.Nc3

3...e6 4.Qb3?! (4.Nf3) Nc6 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Qxd5 (this is a mistake, as Black has 6...Nxd4, winning) Qxd5 7.Nxd5 0-0-0—+

## 7.7.2 See also

- Keres Defence (1.d4 e6 2.c4 Bb4+)
- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

## 7.7.3 Notes

## 7.7.4 References

- Nunn, John (1999), *Nunn’s Chess Openings*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 1-85744-221-0
- Polugajewski, Lev (1984), *Damengambit, Tschigorin System bis Tarrasch-Verteidigung*, Sportverlag Berlin

### 7.7.5 Further reading

- *Baltic Defense to the Queens Gambit*, by Andrew Soltis, Chess Digest, ISBN 0-87568-228-6.
- *Keres Defence*, by Giovanni Falchetta, 1992, ISBN 88-86127-07-3.

## 7.8 Slav Defense

The **Slav Defense** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 c6

The Slav is one of the primary defenses to the **Queen's Gambit**. Although it was analyzed as early as 1590, it was not until the 1920s that it started to be explored extensively. Many masters of **Slavic** descent helped develop the theory of this opening, including **Alapin**, **Alekhine**, **Bogoljubov**, and **Vidmar**.

The Slav received an exhaustive test during the two **Alekhine–Euwe World Championship** matches in 1935 and 1937. Played by 11 of the first 13 world champions, this defense was particularly favored by **Euwe**, **Botvinnik**, and **Smyslov**. More recently the Slav has been adopted by **Anand**, **Ivanchuk**, **Lautier**, **Short**, and other top **grandmasters**, including use in six of the eight games that **Vladimir Kramnik** played as Black in the **2006 World Championship** (in the other two, he played the related **Semi-Slav Defense**).

Today the theory of the Slav is very extensive and well-developed.

### 7.8.1 General considerations

There are three main variations of the Slav:

- The “Pure” Slav or Main Line Slav where Black attempts to develop the light-squared bishop to f5 or g4.
- The ...a6 Slav or Chebanenko Slav with ...a6
- The Semi-Slav with ...e6 (without developing the light-squared bishop). The Semi-Slav Defense, a kind of a combination **Queen's Gambit Declined** and Slav Defense, is a very complex opening in its own right. See the **Semi-Slav Defense** for details.
- There is also a lesser option, the Schlechter Slav with ...g6

Black faces two major problems in many variations of the **Queen's Gambit Declined (QGD)**:

1. Development of his queen bishop is difficult, as it is often blocked by a pawn on e6.
2. The pawn structure offers White targets, especially the possibility of a **minority attack** on the **queenside** in the **Exchange** variation of the QGD.

The “Pure” Slav and ...a6 Slav addresses these problems. Black's queen bishop is unblocked; the pawn structure remains balanced. Also, if Black later takes the gambit pawn with ...dxc4, the support provided by the pawn on c6 (and possibly ...a6) allows ...b5 which may threaten to keep the pawn, or drive away a white piece that has captured it, gaining Black a **tempo** for queenside expansion. On the other hand, Black usually will not be able to develop the queen bishop without first giving up the center with ...dxc4, developing the bishop may leave the black **queenside** weak, and the thematic break ...c5 incurs the loss of a **tempo**.

The Slav can be entered by many move orders. The possibilities include 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 c6, 1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.d4 Nf6, and so on.

### 7.8.2 Alternatives to 3.Nf3

The main line is 3.Nf3. White can also try the following alternatives

#### 3.e3

Black often plays 3...Nf6 but 3...Bf5 is considered to be an easier equalizer. Also, 3...Nf6 4.Nc3 (same as 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e3 below) may give Black some move-order issues for those wanting to play the “Pure” Slav and not the semi-slav or ...a6 Slav.

#### Exchange Slav: 3.cxd5

The Exchange Variation was once described as “the system that takes the fun out of playing the Slav” for Black.<sup>[1]</sup> After 3.cxd5 cxd5, the symmetrical position offers White only the advantage of the extra move, but the **drawish** position offers Black little chance to win unless White is overly ambitious. The rooks will often be exchanged down the now open c-file. To avoid this possibility Black often chooses the move order 2...e6 followed by 3...c6 to enter the Semi-Slav.

### 3.Nc3

The pressure on Black's center prevents 3...Bf5? since after 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.Qb3 White wins a pawn. Black can try the Winawer Countergambit, 3...e5, which was introduced in *Marshall–Winawer, Monte Carlo* 1901 but this is thought to be slightly better for White. The most common continuation is 3...Nf6 when 4.Nf3 transposes to the main line. White can also play 4.e3 when it was thought Black could no longer play the “Pure” Slav with 4...Bf5 (and had to choose between 4...e6 or 4...a6) due to 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Qb3. Therefore, “Pure” Slav players sometimes meet 3.Nc3 with 3...dxc4, the Argentinian Defense, which can transpose to the main line of the “Pure” Slav. Recently the Gambit 4...Bf5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Qb3 Nc6 7.Qxb7 Bd7 has revitalized 4...Bf5.

### 7.8.3 3.Nf3 Introduction

Black usually plays 3...Nf6. 3...e6 transposes to the Semi-Slav. 3...Bf5? is a mistake due to 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.Qb3.

### 7.8.4 Alternatives to 4.Nc3

After 3...Nf6, the main line is 4.Nc3. White can also try the following alternatives:

#### 4.Qc2/4.Qb3

A line that is similar to the *Catalan Opening* is 4. Qc2 or 4.Qb3. Often, White will fianchetto his Light Square Bishop. This has the disadvantage of White's Queen being somewhat exposed on c2. Black can meet 4.Qc2 with 4...g6, intending 5...Bf5. White usually plays 5.Bf4 so that after 5...Bf5 6. Qb3 Qb6 White can play 7. c5! Black has to play 7...Qxb3, which will be met by 8.axb3. White has a moderate advantage in this Queenless middlegame, as white can expand on the queenside and try to create on the queenside, but black's position is solid. The most common continuations are 4...dxc4 5.Qxc4 Bf5/Bg4.

#### Slow Slav: 4.e3

White can avoid the complexities of the main line 4.Nc3 by playing 4.e3. The most common continuation is 4...Bf5 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nh4, when White wins the Bishop pair but Black gets a solid position and often gets counterplay with ...e5. This line was tested several times in the *2006 World Chess Championship*. Alternatively, 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Qb3 Qc7 is fine for Black. White will try to take advantage of the absence of Black's queen bishop on the queenside, but this

isn't enough to gain an advantage if Black plays accurately. Another way to play is 4...Bg4.

### 7.8.5 4.Nc3 Introduction

Black shouldn't play 4...Bf5 because White will gain the advantage with either 5.Qb3 or 5.cxd5 followed by 6.Qb3. Traditionally Black had a choice between 4...e6, the Semi-Slav, and 4...dxc4 before developing the queen bishop, but in the 1990s 4...a6 was introduced, with the idea of developing the queenside without locking in the queen bishop or conceding the center.

#### a6 (Chebanenko) Slav: 4...a6

The a6 Slav occurs after 4...a6. Black seeks an early b5, either before or after capturing at c4.

White can achieve an important space advantage with 5.c5. Both e5 and b6 become important pawn breaks for black. White will often play his bishop to f4, controlling the important dark squares e5, d6, c7, and b8 (this last square reduces Black's control over the b-file should it open). The game can continue 5...Bf5 6.Bf4 Nbd7 7.h3 e6 8.e3.

### 7.8.6 4...dxc4-Alternatives to 5.a4

After 4...dxc4, The main line is 5.a4. White can also try the following alternatives

#### Slav Geller Gambit: 5.e4

White's sharpest try against 4...dxc4 is the **Slav Geller Gambit**, 5.e4. Play usually continues 5...b5 6.e5 Nd5 7.a4 e6, but it is unclear whether the attack is strong enough for the sacrificed pawn. Evaluation of this line changes as improvements are found, but as of 2005 it is generally thought to favor Black.

#### White maintains the pawn with 5.e3

5.e3 is a solid choice known as the Alekhine Variation Play can proceed 5...b5 6.a4 b4

- 7.Na2 e6 8.Bxc4
- 7.Nb1 Ba6 8.Nbd2 c3 9.bxc3 Bxf1 10.Nxf1 bxc3

### 7.8.7 Alapin Variation: 5.a4 Alternatives to 5...Bf5

With 5.a4 White acts against ...b5 and prepares 6.e4 and 7.Bxc4. Black's main move is 5...Bf5. Black can also try the following alternatives

#### Steiner Variation: 5...Bg4

In the **Steiner Variation** (also called the **Bronstein Variation**), 5...Bg4, White may be discouraged from e4 by the possibility 6.e4 e5. More often the game continues 6.Ne5 Bh5.

#### Smyslov Variation: 5...Na6

With the **Smyslov Variation**, 5...Na6, Black allows the e-pawn to come to e4 but can gain counterplay by ...Bg4 and perhaps bringing the knight to b4 e.g. 6.e4 Bg4 7.Bxc4 e6 8.0-0 Nb4.

#### 5...e6 (Soultanbéieff Variation)

### 7.8.8 Mainline, Czech Variation: 5...Bf5

The **Czech Variation** can be considered the main line. With 5...Bf5, Black prevents 6.e4.

#### Bled Attack 6.Nh4

#### Dutch Variation: 6.e3

If White plays 6.e3, the Dutch Variation, play can continue 6...e6 7.Bxc4 Bb4 8.0-0 0-0 with a fairly quiet game. Black can also play 6...Na6 with the idea of 7...Nb4, known as the **Dutch, Lasker Variation**.

#### Krause Attack: 6.Ne5

A more energetic line begins 6.Ne5 (**Krause Attack**) where White intends f2–f3 and e2–e4 or Nxc4, perhaps followed by a *fianchetto* of the king bishop with g2–g3 and Bg2. Black can try either 6...Nbd7 7.Nxc4 Qc7 or 7...Nb6 or 6...e6 7.f3 Bb4, when 8.e4 Bxe4 9.fxe4 Nxe4 is a complex piece sacrifice with the possible continuation 10.Bd2 Qxd4 11.Nxe4 Qxe4+ 12.Qe2 Bxd2+ 13.Kxd2 Qd5+ 14.Kc2 Na6.

### 7.8.9 Notes

- [1] Kasparov, Garry and Keene, Raymond (1989). *Batsford Chess Openings* 2. Batsford. ISBN 0-7134-6099-7.

### 7.8.10 References

- Nunn, John (1999). *Nunn's Chess Openings*. Everyman. ISBN 1-85744-221-0.
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- Fine, Reuben (1990). *Ideas Behind the Chess Openings*. Random House Puzzles & Games. ISBN 0-8129-1756-1.

## 7.9 Semi-Slav Defense

The **Semi-Slav Defense** is a variation of the **Queen's Gambit chess opening** defined by the position reached after the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 c6
3. Nf3 Nf6
4. Nc3 e6

The position may readily be reached by a number of different **move orders**. With Black advancing pawns to both e6 and c6, the opening resembles a mixture of the Orthodox **Queen's Gambit Declined** (QGD) and the **Slav Defense**.

Black is threatening to capture the white **pawn** on c4, and hold it with b7–b5. White can avoid this in a number of ways. About 80% of games continue **5.Bg5** or **5.e3**: the former constitutes a sharp pawn sacrifice, while the latter restricts the dark-squared **bishop** from its natural development to g5. Other possible moves are **5.Qb3**, **5.g3** and **5.cxd5**, the last of which, after 5...exd5, leads to a line of the QGD Exchange Variation where White's early Nf3 enables Black's queen bishop to freely develop, which should give equality (ECO codes D43 and D45).

For the Semi-Slav the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* designates codes D43 through D49.

### 7.9.1 5.e3

The main line continues with **5...Nbd7**. The bishop moves **5...Bd6** and **5...Be7** are seldom seen, as masters realized early on that at e7, the bishop was passively placed and does nothing to further one of Black’s aims, the freeing move ...e5. The unusual move **5...a6** is considered solid for Black. Some sources call **5...a6** the “accelerated Meran”.<sup>[1]</sup>

#### Meran Variation: 6.Bd3

The main variation of the Semi-Slav is the Meran Variation, **6... dxc4 7. Bxc4 b5** (ECO codes D46 to D49), when play usually continues with **8.Bd3**, with **8.Be2** and **8.Bb3** less common alternatives. The line was first played in 1906 in the game Schlechter–Perlis.<sup>[2]</sup> The variation takes its name from the town of Meran (Merano) in northern Italy. During a 1924 tournament in Meran, it was used successfully in the game Gruenfeld–Rubinstein. Gruenfeld adopted the same variation two rounds later against Spielmann, winning as well.<sup>[3]</sup> Viswanathan Anand won two games with Black in his World Chess Championship 2008 match with Vladimir Kramnik. Black surrenders his outpost on d5, gaining a tempo for queenside space expansion by b7–b5. White will play in the center, leading to a rich, complicated game. These opposing strategies, with the ensuing keen play, have long made the Meran a favorite for enterprising players of either color. An example is Gligoric v Ljubojevic, Belgrade, 1979.<sup>[4]</sup>

After the move **8.Bd3**, Black usually plays **8...a6**. Bent Larsen introduced the move **8...Bb7**, which has been dubbed the “improved Meran”.<sup>[5]</sup> According to one source, the move was first played in 1923, but since it was developed by Larsen, it carries his name. Black can also play **8...Bd6**, which is the move Anand played in his victory over Levon Aronian in the Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2013.<sup>[6]</sup>

Though appearing in contemporary master play with less frequency than the Meran, there are other possibilities: **6...Be7**, **6...Bb4**, introduced by the Italian master Max Romih, and **6...Bd6**, which was much the most popular line before the debut of the Meran, and espoused by the American grandmaster Arthur Bisguier throughout his career.

**6...Bd6** and now **7. 0-0 0-0 8. e4 dxe4 9. Nxe4 Nxe4 10. Bxe4** is the most common line. There are now several alternatives for Black, with one a clear error, as it loses a pawn: **10... e5 11. dxe5 Nxe5 12. Nxe5 Bxe5 13. Bxh7+ Kxh7 14. Qh5+ Kg8 15. Qxe5**. This line, however, has a strong drawish tendency in practice, due to the opposite-colored bishops, although all the heavy pieces remain on the board.

Black’s other choices include **10...c5**, although theory regards this as premature as it enables White to play for a

kingside attack with **11.Bc2**, followed by **Qd3** and **Bg5**. **10...Nf6** has also been played, but this misplaces the knight and does nothing to further Black’s play against the center by means of the pawn breaks c6–c5 or e6–e5. Bisguier preferred **10...h6** and it has come to be considered the strongest plan.

The other ideas, **6...Be7**, which has the same drawback as after **5.e3 Be7**, and **6...Bb4**, have become sidelines in modern play.

#### Anti-Meran Variation: 6.Qc2

Position after 7.g4

The main alternative to **6.Bd3** has become **6.Qc2**, once a sideline, this move exploded in popularity in the 1990s, in large part due to Anatoly Karpov’s advocacy. The idea is to wait for Black to commit to ...dxc4 before playing **Bd3**. Black commonly replies with **6...Bd6** and now White can choose between two very different continuations:

**Karpov Variation: 7.Bd3** **7.Bd3**, Karpov first played **7.Be2** but it soon transpired that the d3-square gives White better chances.

**Shirov–Shabalov Gambit: 7.g4** Another increasingly common gambit line used in the Anti-Meran is the sharp **7.g4**. Popularized by Alexander Shabalov and Alexey Shirov, the gambit destabilizes the center for Black and has been successful for several grandmasters, including Kasparov, who won the first game of his 2003 match against the computer chess program Deep Junior with it.<sup>[7]</sup>

### 7.9.2 5.Bg5

Position after 5.Bg5

The Anti-Meran Gambit (ECO code D44) arises after **5.Bg5**. Possible replies include **5...Nbd7**, **5...dxc4**, **5...h6**, and **5...Be7**. White refuses to shut in the dark-squared bishop, instead developing it to an active square where it pins the black knight. It is now possible for Black to transpose to either the Cambridge Springs Defence with **5...Nbd7 6. e3 Qa5**, or enter the Orthodox Defense with **6...Be7**.

#### Botvinnik Variation: 5...dxc4

This line is extremely complicated, with theory stretching past move thirty in some variations. Black captures a pawn

by **5...dxc4**. White takes control of the center with **6.e4** as Black defends with **6...b5**. The main line of the Botvinnik now continues **7. e5 h6 8. Bh4 g5 9. Nhg5 hxg5 10. Bxg5 Nbd7**. White will regain his piece with interest, emerging with an extra pawn, but Black will soon complete his development, gaining great dynamic compensation, whereas White's task is rather more difficult. White will **fianchetto** his king bishop and **castle kingside**, while Black will play **c5**, **Qb6**, **castle queenside**, and can carry out an attack in the center or on either flank, leading to complex play. The opening was introduced by **Mikhail Botvinnik** in the 1945 USSR vs USA radio match vs **Arnold Denker**. Today, **Alex Yermolinsky** has an excellent record with the white pieces and **Alexei Shirov** has been Black's chief proponent in this variation. Although this variation bears Botvinnik's name, he was not the first person known to have played it—**Klaus Junge** is credited as the actual inventor.<sup>[8]</sup>

### Moscow Variation: 5...h6

The Moscow Variation **5... h6 6. Bxf6 Qxf6** gives rise to play of a different character from the Botvinnik variation. Black has the bishop pair, which gives him good long-term chances, but must avoid prematurely opening the position in the face of White's superior development and central control, as his position is initially solid but passive. **Alexei Dreev** has played this line successfully as Black. The gambit line **6.Bh4** (the Anti-Moscow Variation) was once considered dubious, but has seen a recent resurgence. In return for the pawn, White receives a lead in development and a strong **initiative**. This dynamic line, which is characteristic of the modern game, has been played by many strong grandmasters, with the theoretical verdict remaining inconclusive.

### 7.9.3 Notes

- [1] [http://www.chess.com/opening/eco/D45\\_Semi\\_Slav\\_Defense\\_Accelerated\\_Meran\\_Variation](http://www.chess.com/opening/eco/D45_Semi_Slav_Defense_Accelerated_Meran_Variation)
- [2] <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessopening?eco=D48>
- [3] "An Opening Created in 1924 Still Leads to Complex Battles" *New York Times*, 29 January 2006
- [4] Gligoric v Ljubojevic, Belgrade, 1979
- [5] <http://www.chess.com/article/view/larsen-s-improved-meran-the-great-dane-deigns-to-allow-to-play>
- [6] <http://en.chessbase.com/Home/TabId/211/PostId/4010058/cbm-153--for-professionals-and-connoisseurs-070613.aspx>
- [7] Kasparov vs. Deep Junior, Game 1

- [8] Igor Štohl, Chessbase Tutorials Volume 3

### 7.9.4 References

- *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings*, volume D, sections 43–49
- Kuijf, Marinus (1995). *Slav: Botvinnik Variation. New In Chess*. ISBN 90-71689-80-8.
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- Vera, Reinaldo (2007). *Chess Explained: The Meran Semi-Slav*. Gambit. ISBN 9781904600817.
- David Vigorito, *Play the Semi-Slav*, Quality Chess, 2008 ISBN 978-91-85779-01-7

## 7.10 Symmetrical Defense

The **Symmetrical Defense** (or **Austrian Defense**) is a **chess opening** that begins with the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 c5

First described in print by **Alessandro Salvio** in 1604, the opening is often called the Austrian Defense because it was studied by **Austrian** chess players including Hans Haberditz (c. 1901–57), **Hans Müller** (1896–1971), and **GM Ernst Grünfeld**.<sup>[1]</sup>

The Symmetrical Defense is an uncommon variation of the **Queen's Gambit Declined**. It poses the purest test of **Queen's Gambit** theory—whether Black can equalize by simply copying White's moves. Most opening theoreticians believe that White should gain the advantage and at best Black is playing for a draw.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 7.10.1 3.cxd5

White often replies **3.cxd5**, but other moves are playable and may lead to **transpositions** into more well-known variations such as the **Queen's Gambit Accepted** and the **Tarrasch Defense**. After **3.cxd5** it is not advisable for Black to play **3...Qxd5**, because either **4.Nf3 cxd4 5.Nc3 Qa5 6.Nxd4** or **5...Qd8 6.Qxd4 Qxd4 7.Nxd4** give White a big lead in development.<sup>[3]</sup> Instead, Black should play **3...Nf6** intending to recapture on d5 with his knight. White should be able to maintain the advantage with either **4.Nf3** or **4.e4**. Possible continuations are **4.Nf3 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nxd5 6.e4 Nc7** or **4.e4 Nxe4 5.dxc5 Nxc5 6.Nc3 e6**.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

## 7.10.2 References

- [1] Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1996), “Austrian Defence”, *The Oxford Companion to Chess*, Oxford University, ISBN 0-19-280049-3
- [2] Korn, Walter (1982), “Queen’s Gambit Declined”, *Modern Chess Openings* (Twelfth ed.), David McKay, p. 266, ISBN 0-679-13500-6
- [3] Pachman, Luděk (1982), *The Opening Game in Chess*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, p. 140, ISBN 0-7100-9222-9
- [4] Nunn, John, ed. (1999), “1 d4 d5 and Unusual Replies to the Queen’s Gambit”, *Nunn’s Chess Openings*, Everyman Chess, p. 365, ISBN 1-85744-221-0
- [5] Kasparov, Garry; Keene, Raymond (1994) [1989], “Queen’s Gambit”, *Batsford Chess Openings 2*, Henry Holt, p. 80, ISBN 0-8050-3409-9

## 7.11 Chigorin Defense

For the Chigorin Variation of the Ruy Lopez, see [Ruy Lopez#Chigorin Variation](#).

The **Chigorin Defense** is a chess opening named for 19th century Russian grandmaster Mikhail Chigorin. An uncommonly played defense to the Queen’s Gambit, it begins with the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 Nc6

The Chigorin Defense violates several classical principles: Black does not maintain the center pawn at d5, the c-pawn is blocked, and Black must be willing to trade a bishop for a knight. In return Black gets quick development and piece pressure on the center.

Although opening assessments change as improvements are found for each side, the Chigorin is generally considered playable for Black and it is useful as a surprise weapon against the Queen’s Gambit. Alexander Morozevich is perhaps the only modern grandmaster who regularly plays the Chigorin Defense, although in the 1980s, Vasily Smyslov did employ the opening against Garry Kasparov. Morozevich has also published a book on the Chigorin Defence,<sup>[1]</sup> in which he gives both a theoretical and a personal view on the opening.

### 7.11.1 Main variations

The Chigorin Defense has the ECO classification D07. Because the Chigorin is an unusual defense, the theory of this

opening is not as well developed as that for more popular openings.

After 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6 some of the most commonly played variations are:

#### 3.Nc3

- 3...Nf6 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 e5 7.d5 Nb8 or 7.Nf3 exd4.
- 3...dxc4 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.e4 Bg4 6.Be3 e6 7.Bxc4 Bb4 is a position that occurs very frequently in current practice.

#### 3.Nf3

- 3...Bg4 4.cxd5 Bxf3 (see first diagram)
- 5.gxf3 Qxd5 6.e3 and now Black has two very different, but proven ways of playing 6...e5 7.Nc3 Bb4 and 6...e6 7.Nc3 Qh5.
- 5.dxc6 Bxc6 6.Nc3 and Black has now two well established options 6...Nf6 and 6...e6.
- 3...e6 is a bad move.

#### 3.cxd5 Qxd5

- 4.e3 e5 5.Nc3 Bb4 6.Bd2 Bxc3 (see second diagram)
- 7.bxc3 and now black’s main moves are 7...Nf6 and 7...Qd6.
- 7.Bxc3 has received considerable attention in recent years and 7...exd4 8.Ne2 Nf6 9.Nxd4 0-0 seems to be considered Black’s most reliable choice, but the sharper 8...Bg4 is also sometimes played.
- 4. Nf3

### 7.11.2 Notes

- [1] Alexander Morozevich & Vladimir Barskij, *The Chigorin Defence According to Morozevich*, 2007

### 7.11.3 References

- Ward, Chris (2002). *Unusual Queen’s Gambit Declined*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-218-0.
- Broznik, Valeri (2001). *Die Tschigorin-Verteidigung*. Schachverlag Kania. ISBN 3-931192-21-0.

### 7.11.4 Further reading

- Watson, John (1981). *Queen's Gambit, Chigorin Defence*. Batsford. ISBN 978-0713439960.

### 7.11.5 External links

- 869 games at ChessGames.com

## 7.12 Albin Countergambit

The **Albin Countergambit** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. c4 e5

and the usual continuation is:

3. dxe5 d4

The opening is an uncommon defense to the Queen's Gambit. In exchange for the gambit pawn, Black has a central wedge at d4 and gets some chances for an attack. Often White will try to return the pawn at an opportune moment to gain a positional advantage.

In the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* the Albin Countergambit is assigned codes D08 and D09.

### 7.12.1 History

Although this opening was originally played by Cavallotti against Salvioli at the Milan tournament of 1881, it takes its name from Adolf Albin, who played it against Lasker in New York 1893. Though not played frequently at the master level, Russian Grandmaster Alexander Morozevich has recently made some successful use of it.

### 7.12.2 Main line

Main line after 3...d4 4.Nf3 Nc6

The main line continues 4.Nf3 Nc6 (4...c5 allows 5.e3 because Black no longer has the bishop check) and now White's primary options are 5.a3, 5.Nbd2, and 5.g3. Perhaps White's surest try for an advantage is to fianchetto his king bishop with 5.g3 followed by Bg2 and Nbd2. Black will often castle queenside. A typical continuation is 5.g3 Be6 6.Nbd2 Qd7 7.Bg2 0-0-0 8.0-0 Bh3.

### 7.12.3 Variations

#### Lasker trap

The Black pawn at d4 is stronger than it may appear. The careless move 4.e3? can lead to the **Lasker Trap**. After 4...Bb4+ 5.Bd2 dxe3 6.Bxb4?? is a blunder—6...exf2+ 7.Ke2 fxe3=N+! and Black wins. The Lasker Trap is notable because it is rare to see an underpromotion in practical play.

#### Spassky Variation

In the Spassky Variation White plays 4.e4 to take advantage of the fact that an en passant capture must be made immediately after the enemy pawn advances. So now after 4...Bb4+ 5.Bd2 the en passant capture ...dxe3 is no longer available to Black.

### 7.12.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 7.12.5 References

- Ward, Chris (2002). *Unusual Queen's Gambit Declined*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-218-0.
- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992). *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Adolf Albin and the Genesis of the Albin Counter Gambit Part I, O. G. Urcan, chesscafe.com
- Adolf Albin and the Genesis of the Albin Counter Gambit Part II, O. G. Urcan, chesscafe.com

### 7.12.6 Further reading

- Luc Henris, *The Complete Albin Counter-Gambit*, Jean-Louis Marchand Editions, Brussels, 2013.

### 7.12.7 External links

- Albin Counter Gambit Bibliography
- Opening Report: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 d4 (4063 games)

# Chapter 8

## d4 Openings – Indian Defence

### 8.1 Indian Defence

**Indian defences** are chess openings characterised by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6<sup>[1]</sup>

They are all to varying degrees hypermodern defences, where Black invites White to establish an imposing presence in the centre with the plan of undermining and ultimately destroying it. Although the Indian defences were championed in the 1920s by players in the hypermodern school, they were not fully accepted until Russian players showed in the late 1940s that these systems are sound for Black. Since then, the Indian defences have become a popular way for Black to respond to 1.d4 because they often offer an unbalanced game with winning chances for both sides. Transpositions are important and many variations can be reached by several move orders.

The usual White second move is 2.c4, grabbing a larger share of the centre and allowing the move Nc3, to prepare for moving the e-pawn to e4 without blocking the c-pawn with the knight. Black's most popular replies are

- 2...e6, freeing the king's bishop and leading into the Nimzo-Indian Defence, Queen's Indian Defence, Bogó-Indian Defence, Modern Benoni, Catalan Opening, or regular lines of the Queen's Gambit Declined,
- 2...g6, preparing a fianchetto of the king's bishop and entering the King's Indian Defence or Grünfeld Defence, and
- 2...c5, the Benoni Defense, with an immediate counter-punch in the centre,

but other moves are played as detailed below.

Instead of 2.c4, White often plays 2.Nf3. Then Black may play 2...d5 which may transpose to a Queen's Gambit after 3.c4. Or Black may play 2...e6 which retains possibilities

of transposing to a Queen's Gambit or Queen's Indian Defence. Alternatively 2...g6 may transpose to a King's Indian Defence or Grünfeld Defence, while 2...c5 invites transposition to a Benoni. White can deny Black any of these transpositions and by refraining from c2-c4 over the next several moves.

On the second move, White can also play 2.Bg5, the Trompowsky Attack. Black can respond 2...Ne4 (see 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 Ne4), or 2...e6 (see 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 e6), among other moves. A third alternative for White is the rarer 2.Nc3. Then black may play 2...d5 for Richter-Veresov Attack (D01, see 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5). Black may also play 2...g6 (see 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 g6).

#### 8.1.1 Variations

Nimzo-Indian Defence  
King's Indian Defence  
Grünfeld Defence  
Queen's Indian Defence  
Benoni Defense

- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 b6 Accelerated Queen's Indian Defence
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 Benoni Defence
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 Benko Gambit (or Volga Gambit)
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c6 Slav-Indian Defence
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 Nc6 Black Knights' Tango
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6 3.Nc3 e5 Old Indian Defence
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6 3.Nc3 Bf5 Janowski Indian Defence
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 Ne4 Döry Defence
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 Budapest Gambit
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 Nimzo-Indian Defence

- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.d5 **Modern Benoni**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+ **Bogo-Indian Defence**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b5 **Polish Defence**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 **Queen's Indian Defence**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.d5 b5 **Blumenfeld Gambit**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 **Catalan Opening**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Bg5 **Neo-Indian Attack**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3. a3?! **Australian Attack**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 **Grünfeld Defence**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 **King's Indian Defence (KID)**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 h6 3.c4 g5 **Nadanian Attack**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Bg5 **Torre Attack**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 **East Indian Defence**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4. Bf4 Bg7 5. e3 O-O 6. Be2 **Barry Attack**
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 **Trompowsky Attack**

Advocated by **Nimzowitsch** as early as 1913, the **Nimzo-Indian Defence** was the first of the Indian systems to gain full acceptance. It remains one of the most popular and well-respected defences to 1.d4, and White often chooses move orders designed to avoid it. Black attacks the centre with pieces and is prepared to trade a bishop for a knight to weaken White's queenside with **doubled pawns**.

The **King's Indian Defence** is aggressive and somewhat risky, and generally indicates that Black will not be satisfied with a draw. Although it was played occasionally as early as the late 19th century, the King's Indian was considered inferior until the 1940s when it was featured in the games of **Bronstein**, **Boleslavsky**, and **Reshevsky**. **Fischer's** favoured defence to 1.d4, its popularity faded in the mid-1970s. **Kasparov's** successes with the defence restored the King's Indian to prominence in the 1980s.

**Ernst Grünfeld** debuted the **Grünfeld Defence** in 1922. Distinguished by the move 3...d5, Grünfeld intended it as an improvement to the King's Indian which was not considered entirely satisfactory at that time. The Grünfeld has been adopted by World Champions **Smyslov**, **Fischer**, and **Kasparov**.

The **Queen's Indian Defence** is considered solid, safe, and perhaps somewhat **drawish**. Black often chooses the Queen's Indian when White avoids the Nimzo-Indian by

playing 3.Nf3 instead of 3.Nc3. Black constructs a sound position that makes no positional concessions, although sometimes it is difficult for Black to obtain good winning chances. **Karpov** is a leading expert in this opening.

The **Benoni Defence** is a risky attempt by Black to unbalance the position and gain active piece play at the cost of allowing White a pawn wedge at d5 and a central majority. **Tal** popularised the defence in the 1960s by winning several brilliant games with it, and **Bobby Fischer** occasionally adopted it, with good results, including a win in his 1972 **World Championship** match against **Boris Spassky**. Often Black adopts a slightly different move order, playing 2...e6 before 3...c5 in order to avoid the sharpest lines for White.

The **Benko Gambit** is often played by strong players, and is very popular at lower levels. Black plays to open lines on the queenside where White will be subject to considerable pressure. If White accepts the gambit, Black's compensation is positional rather than tactical, and his initiative can last even after many piece exchanges and well into the **endgame**. White often chooses instead either to decline the gambit pawn or return it.

The **Bogo-Indian Defence** is a solid alternative to the Queen's Indian, into which it sometimes transposes. It is less popular than that opening, however, perhaps because many players are loath to surrender the **bishop pair** (particularly without doubling White's pawns), as Black often ends up doing after 4.Nbd2. The classical 4.Bd2 Qe7 is also often seen, although more recently 4...a5!? and even 4...c5!? have emerged as alternatives. Transposition to the **Nimzo-Indian** with 4.Nc3 is perfectly playable but rarely seen, since most players who play 3.Nf3 do so in order to avoid that opening.

The **Old Indian Defence** was introduced by **Tarrasch** in 1902, but it is more commonly associated with **Chigorin** who adopted it five years later. It is similar to the King's Indian in that both feature a ...d6 and ...e5 pawn centre, but in the Old Indian Black's king bishop is developed to e7 rather than being fianchettoed on g7. The Old Indian is solid, but Black's position is usually cramped and it lacks the dynamic possibilities found in the King's Indian.

The **Black Knights' Tango** or **Mexican Defence** introduced by **Carlos Torre** in 1925 in **Baden-Baden** shares similarities with **Alekhine's Defence** as Black attempts to induce a premature advance of the white pawns. It may transpose into many other defences.

The **Neo-Indian Attack**, **Torre Attack**, and **Trompowsky Attack** are White anti-Indian variations. Related to the **Richter-Veresov Attack**, they feature an early Bg5 by White and avoid much of the detailed theory of other queen's pawn openings. Another option is the **Barry Attack**, popular with club players and characterised by the moves 1.d4 Nf6 2.

Nf3 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. Bf4 Bg7 5. e3 O-O 6. Be2. White usually follows up with Ne5 and h2-h4-h5, a direct attack on the Black king. The Barry Attack has also been tried out at Grandmaster level by **Mark Hebden** and **Julian Hodgson**.

The **Blumenfeld Gambit** (or Countergambit) bears a superficial but misleading resemblance to the Benko Gambit, as Black's goals are very different. Black gambits a wing pawn in an attempt to build a strong centre. White can either accept the gambit or decline it to maintain a small positional advantage. Although the Blumenfeld is playable for Black it is not very popular.

The Döry Defence (2...Ne4 or 2...e6 3.Nf3 Ne4) is uncommon, but it was sometimes adopted by **Keres**. It will sometimes transpose into a variation of the Queen's Indian Defence but there are also independent lines.

The Accelerated Queen's Indian Defence (2...b6) is playable, although modern theory favours the Queen's Indian only after 2...e6 3 Nf3.

The **Slav-Indian Defence** is an obscure idea that may transpose into the King's Indian or **Slav Defence**.

The **Budapest Gambit** is rarely played in grandmaster games, but more often adopted by amateurs. Although it is a **gambit**, White cannot hold on to his extra pawn without making compromises in the deployment of his pieces, so he often chooses to return the pawn and retain the initiative.

The Nadanian Attack (1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 h6 3.c4 g5) is an aggressive attempt by Black to unbalance the position. The early 2...h6 and 3...g5 are designed to deal with a drawish variations such as **Colle System**, **London System** and **Torre Attack**. The line was introduced in 2005 by **Ashot Nadanian**, but has never enjoyed widespread popularity among top-flight chess players.

### 8.1.2 Historical background

The earliest known use of the term “Indian Defence” was in 1884, and the name was attributed to the opening's use by the Indian player **Moheschunder Bannerjee** against **John Cochrane**.<sup>[2]</sup> **Philip W. Sergeant** describes Moheschunder as having been as of 1848 “a Brahman in the *Mofussil*—up country, as we might say—who had never been beaten at chess!”<sup>[3]</sup> Sergeant wrote in 1934 (substituting algebraic notation for his descriptive notation):<sup>[4]</sup>

The Indian Defences by g6 coupled with d6, or b6 coupled with e6, were largely taught to European players by the example of Moheschunder and other Indians, to whom the fianchetto developments were a natural legacy from their own game. The fondness for them of the present Indian champion of British chess, **Mir Sultan Khan**,

is well known. But they are now so widely popular that **Dr. S. G. Tartakover** was able to declare, some years ago, that “to-day fianchettoes are trumps.” A sequel hardly to have been anticipated from the discovery of Moheschunder in the *Mofussil*!

In the following game, Moheschunder (Black) plays the Grünfeld Defence against Cochrane in 1855—some 38 years before **Ernst Grünfeld** was born.

John Cochrane–Moheschunder Bannerjee, May 1855:

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. e3 Bg7 5. Nf3 0-0 6. cxd5 Nxd5 7. Be2 Nxc3 8. bxc3 c5 9. 0-0 cxd4 10. cxd4 Nc6 11. Bb2 Bg4 12. Rc1 Rc8 13. Ba3 Qa5 14. Qb3 Rfe8 15. Rc5 Qb6 16. Rb5 Qd8 17. Ng5 Bxe2 18. Nxf7 Na5 and White mates in three (19.Nh6+ **double check** Kh8 20.Qg8+ Rxc8 21.Nf7#).<sup>[5][6]</sup>

Another of the games between these players transposed to what would today be called the **Four Pawns Attack** against the **King's Indian Defence**. This time Moheschunder, as Black, won after some enterprising (and perhaps dubious) **sacrificial** play:

1. e4 d6 2. d4 g6 3. c4 Bg7 4. Nc3 Nf6 5. f4 0-0 6. Nf3 Bg4 7. Bd3? e5! 8. fxe5 dxe5 9. d5 Nxe4!? 10. Nxe4 f5 11. Neg5 e4 12. Ne6 exf3! 13. Nxd8?! fxg2 14. Rg1 Bxd1 15. Ne6 Bg4 16. Nxf8 Kxf8 17. Rxc2 Nd7 18. Bf4 Nc5 19. Kd2 Rc8 20. Kc2 Bf3 21. Rf2 Nxd3 22. Kxd3 Be4+ 23. Ke3 b5 24. cxb5 Bxd5 25. Rd2 Bc4 26. Rad1 Bf6 27. Bh6+ Kg8 28. Kf4 Re8 29. b3 Bxb5 30. Rc1 Be2! 31. Re1 Re4+ 32. Kg3 Bh4+ 0-1<sup>[7]</sup>

### 8.1.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 8.1.4 References

#### Notes

- [1] ECO: A45 Queen's Pawn: Indian
- [2] “Indian Defence”, *Chess Player's Chronicle*, 22 October 1884: 172, retrieved 2008-07-22 In this case the opening moves were 1.e4 d6 2.d4 g6.

- [3] Philip W. Sergeant, *A Century of British Chess*, David McKay, 1934, p. 68.
- [4] Sergeant, pp. 68-69.
- [5] Edward Winter, *Kings, Commoners and Knaves: Further Chess Explorations*, Russell Enterprises, Inc., 1999, p. 141. ISBN 1-888690-04-6.
- [6] Cochrane-Moheschunder
- [7] Tim Harding, *A History of The City of London Chess Magazine (Part 1)*. Retrieved on 2009-03-18.

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- Nunn, John (1999), *Nunn's Chess Openings*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 1-85744-221-0
- Bosch, Jeroen (2006), "8", *Secrets of Opening Surprises 5*, New in Chess, p. 144, ISBN 90-5691-170-8

## 8.1.5 Further reading

- Palliser, Richard (2008), *Starting out: d-pawn attacks. The Colle-Zukertort, Barry and 150 Attacks*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 978-1-85744-578-7

# 8.2 Trompowsky Attack

The **Trompowsky Attack** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. Bg5

With his second move, White intends to exchange his bishop for Black's knight, inflicting doubled pawns upon Black in the process. This is not a lethal threat; Black can choose to fall in with White's plan.

The Trompowsky is a popular alternative to the more common lines after 1.d4 Nf6 beginning 2.c4 or 2.Nf3. By

playing 2.Bg5, White sidesteps immense bodies of opening theory of various Indian Defences like the Queen's Indian, King's Indian, Nimzo-Indian, as well as the Grünfeld Defence.

The opening is named after the one-time Brazilian champion Octavio Trompowsky (1897–1984) who played it in the 1930s and 1940s. The Trompowsky has also been called *The Zot*.<sup>[1]</sup>

Julian Hodgson and Antoaneta Stefanova are among several grandmasters who often employ the Trompowsky.

## 8.2.1 Main lines

Black has a number of ways to meet the Trompowsky, some of which avoid doubled pawns, while others allow them. The most common Black responses are discussed here.

- **2... Ne4** is the most common reply. Although Black violates an opening principle ("Don't move the same piece twice in the opening"), his move attacks White's bishop, forcing it to either move again or be defended.
  - **3. h4** (Raptor Variation<sup>[2]</sup>) defends the bishop, and Black should avoid 3...Nxg5? since that will open up a file for the White rook. Instead Black can start making a grab for the centre and kick the White bishop away with a timely ...h6 advance.
  - Usually, White retreats with **3. Bf4** or **3. Bh4**. In this case, Black will try to maintain his knight on e4, or at least gain a concession before retreating it. (For instance, if White chases the knight away with f3, he will have taken away the best development square from his own knight.)
  - **3. Nf3?** is rarely seen except among amateurs; after **3... Nxg5 4. Nxg5 e5!** Black regains the lost time by the discovered attack on the knight; White's center is liquidated and he has no compensation for the bishop pair.
- **2... e6** also avoids doubled pawns since the queen can recapture if White plays Bxf6. The move 2...e6 also opens a diagonal for the Black king's bishop to develop. On the debit side, the knight is now pinned, and this can be annoying.
- **2... d5** makes a grab for the centre, allowing White to inflict the doubled pawns. If White does so, Black will try to show that his pair of bishops is valuable, and that White has wasted time by moving his bishop twice in order to trade it off. By capturing away from the center (...exf6), Black will preserve a defensible

pawn structure and open diagonals for his queen and dark-squared bishop.

- **2... c5** also makes a grab for the centre, planning to trade off the c-pawn for White's d-pawn. Again, White can inflict doubled pawns, and again Black will try to make use of his bishop pair.
- **2... g6** is another line, practically begging White to inflict the doubled pawns. Black's development is slightly slower than in the two lines previously mentioned. Black is intending to fianchetto his dark-squared bishop which is unopposed by a White counterpart, and will try to prove that this is more important than the doubled pawn weakness.
- **2... c6** is an offbeat line in which Black intends ...Qb6, forcing White to defend or sacrifice his b-pawn. White can play the thematic **3. Bxf6** or **3. Nf3**, but must avoid **3. e3?? Qa5+**, when White resigned (in light of 4...Qxg5) in Djordjević vs. Kovačević, Bela Crkva 1984—"the shortest ever loss by a master" (Graham Burgess, *The Quickest Chess Victories of All Time*, p. 33).

## 8.2.2 1.d4 d5 2.Bg5

White can also play 2. Bg5 after 1. d4 d5. This is known as the **Pseudo-Trompowsky**, **Hodgson Attack**, **Levitsky Attack**, **Queen's Bishop Attack**, and **Bishop Attack**, and is covered in ECO code D00. Play can transpose to the Trompowsky if Black plays 2...Nf6.

## 8.2.3 1.d4 f5 2.Bg5

White can also play 2.Bg5 against the Dutch Defense, 1...f5, and it is a common alternative to the mainline 2.g3.

## 8.2.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

## 8.2.5 Notes

[1] Trompowsky Attack

[2] "Igor Miladinovic vs Michael Adams, Moscow olm 62/53 1994, Trompowsky Attack: Raptor Variation (A45)". ChessGames.com. Retrieved 2009-10-26.

## 8.2.6 References

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.

## 8.2.7 Further reading

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- Pert, Richard (2013). *Playing the Trompowsky*. Quality Chess. ISBN 9781907982767.
- Edward Winter's "The Trompowsky Opening" (Chess Notes Feature Article)

## 8.2.8 External links

- 22,360 Games at Chess.com

## 8.3 King's Indian Defence

The **King's Indian Defence** is a common chess opening. It arises after the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 g6

Black intends to follow up with 3...Bg7 and 4...d6. The Grünfeld Defence arises when Black plays 3...d5 instead, and is considered a separate opening. White's major third move options are 3.Nc3, 3.Nf3 or 3.g3, with both the King's Indian and Grünfeld playable against these moves.

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) classifies the King's Indian Defence under the codes E60 through E99.

### 8.3.1 Overview

The King's Indian is a **hypermodern** opening, where Black deliberately allows White control of the centre with his pawns, with the view to subsequently challenge it with the moves ...e5 or ...c5. Until the mid-1930s, it was generally regarded as highly suspect, but the analysis and play of three strong Ukrainian players in particular—**Alexander Konstantinopolsky**, **Isaac Boleslavsky**, and **David Bronstein**—helped to make the defence much more respected and popular. It is a dynamic opening, exceptionally complex, and a favourite of former world champions **Garry Kasparov**, **Bobby Fischer**, and **Mikhail Tal**, with prominent grandmasters **Viktor Korchnoi**, **Miguel Najdorf**, **Efim Geller**, **John Nunn**, **Svetozar Gligorić**, **Wolfgang Uhlmann**, **Ilya Smirin**, **Teimour Radjabov** and **Ding Liren** having also contributed much to the theory and practice of this opening.

### 8.3.2 Variations

The main variations of the King's Indian are:

#### Classical Variation: 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 e5

##### Classical Variation

The **Classical Variation** is 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 e5.

- The **Main Line** or **Mar del Plata** Variation continues 7.0-0 Nc6 8.d5 Ne7. Now White has a wide variety of moves, including 9.b4, 9.Ne1, and 9.Nd2, among others. Typically, White will try to attack on the **queenside** by preparing the pawn break c4–c5, while Black will attack on the **kingside** by transferring his knight from f6 to d7 (usually better placed than at e8, as it helps slow White's queenside play with c4–c5), and starting a kingside pawn storm with f7–f5–f4 and g6–g5. 9.b4, introduced by Korchnoi in the 1970s, used to put top players off playing this line, but it has recently been revived by Radjabov.
- 7.0-0 Nbd7 is the **Old Main Line**, and is playable, though less common nowadays than 7...Nc6.
- 7.0-0 exd4 8.Nxd4 is also possible, although White's extra space usually is of greater value than Black's counterplay against White's centre. Made popular in the mid-1990s by the Russian Grandmaster **Igor Glek**, new ideas were found for White yet some of the best lines for White were later refuted. White still has an advantage in most lines.

- 7.0-0 Na6 has seen some popularity recently. The purpose of this awkward-looking move is to move the knight to c5 after an eventual d5, while guarding c7 if Black should play ...Qe8. Play commonly continues 8.Be3 Ng4 9.Bg5 Qe8! but White has also tried:
  - 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.Qxd8 Rxd8 with even chances;
  - 8.d5 Nc5 9.Qc2 a5 may transpose into the **Petrosian System** (see below);
  - 8.Bg5 h6 9.Bh4 Qe8 10.Bxf6 Bxf6 11.c5!, which is not totally reliable for Black.
- 7.d5 is the **Petrosian System**, so named for the 1963–69 world champion, who often essayed the line in the 1960s, with **Vladimir Kramnik** playing this variation extensively in the 1990s. The plans for both sides are roughly the same as in the main variation. After 7...a5 White plays 8.Bg5 to pin the knight, making it harder for Black to achieve the f7–f5 break. In the early days of the system, Black would drive the bishop back with ...h6 and ...g5, though players subsequently switched to ideas involving ...Na6, ...Qe8 and ...Bd7, making White's c4–c5 break more difficult, only then playing for kingside activity. **Joe Gallagher**<sup>[1]</sup> has recommended the flexible 7...Na6 which has similar ideas to 7...a5.
- 7.Be3 is often known as the **Gligoric System**, after the **World Championship Candidate**, who has contributed much to King's Indian theory and practice with both colours. Recently, other strong players such as Korchnoi, **Anatoly Karpov**, and Kasparov have played this line. The main idea behind this move is to avoid the theoretical lines that arise after 7.0-0 Nc6. This move allows White to maintain, for the moment, the tension in the centre. If Black plays mechanically with 7...Nc6, 8.d5 Ne7 9.Nd2! is a favourable setup, so Black most often responds by crossing his opponent's plans with 7...Ng4 8.Bg5 f6 9.Bh4 Nc6, but other moves are also seen, such as:
  - 7...Na6 8.0-0 transposing into the modern.
  - 7...h6!? is a favourite of **John Nunn**. The main line runs 8.0-0 Ng4 9.Bc1 Nc6 10.d5 Ne7 11.Ne1 f5 12.Bxg4 fxg4. In this subvariation, Black's kingside play is of a different type than normal KID lines, as it lacks the standard pawn breaks, so he will now play g6–g5 and Ng6–f4, often investing material in a piece attack in the f-file against the white king, while White plays for the usual queenside breakthrough with c4–c5.
  - 7...exd4 immediately surrenders the centre, with a view to playing a quick c7–c6 and d6–d5. For example, 8.Nxd4 Re8 9.f3 c6 10.Qd2

(10.Bf2!?) 10...d5 11.exd5 cxd5 12.0-0 Nc6 13.c5 and 13...Rxe3!? (which was first seen in game 11 of the **1990 World Chess Championship** between Kasparov and Karpov).

- In the **Exchange Variation** (7.dxe5 dxe5 8.Qxd8 Rxd8), White exchanges queens and is content to play for a small, safe advantage in the relatively quiet positions which will ensue in this queenless middlegame. The line is often played by White players hoping for an early draw, but there is still a lot of play left in the position. White tries to exploit d6 with moves such as b4, c5, Nf3–d2–c4–d6, etc., while Black will play to control the hole on d4. In practice, it is easier to exploit d4, and chances are balanced. If Black is able to play ...Nd4, he will often have at least an equal position, even when this involves the sacrifice of a pawn to eliminate White's dark-squared bishop.

### Sämisch Variation: 5.f3

Main article: **King's Indian Defence, Sämisch Variation**

The **Sämisch Variation** is 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3. It is named after **Friedrich Sämisch**, who developed the system in the 1920s. This often leads to very sharp play with the players castling on opposite wings and attacking each other's kings, as in the Bagirov–Gufeld game given below, though it may also give rise to heavyweight positional struggles. Black has a variety of pawn breaks, such as ...e5, ...c5 and ...b5 (prepared by ...c6 and/or ...a6). This can transpose to the **Modern Benoni** after 5...0-0 6.Bg5 c5 7.d5 e6. World champions **Mikhail Botvinnik**, **Mikhail Tal**, **Tigran Petrosian**, **Boris Spassky**, **Anatoly Karpov** and **Garry Kasparov** have all played this variation. This line defends the e4 pawn to create a secure centre and enables White to begin an attack kingside with Be3, Qd2, Bh6, g2–g4 and h2–h4. It allows placement of a bishop on e3 without allowing ...Ng4; however, its drawback is that it deprives the knight on g1 of its most natural square, thus impeding development of the kingside. Black can strike for the centre as previously mentioned or delay with 6...Nc6, 7...a6 and 8...Rb8 so that Black can play ...b7–b5 to open lines on the queenside.

The Sämisch Gambit. Black has sacrificed a pawn for temporary advantages.

The Classical Defence to the Sämisch is 5...0-0 6.Be3 e5, when White has a choice between closing the centre with 7.d5, or maintaining the tension with 7.Nge2. Kasparov was a major proponent of this defence.<sup>[2]</sup>

The Sämisch Gambit arises after 5...0-0 6.Be3 c5. This is a pawn sacrifice, and was once considered dubious.

As Black's play has been worked out, this evaluation has changed, and the gambit now enjoys a good reputation. A practical drawback, however, is that a well-prepared but unambitious White player can often enter lines leading to a forced draw.<sup>[2]</sup> The line where White accepts the gambit runs 5...0-0 6.Be3 c5 7.dxc5 dxc5 8.Qxd8 (8.e5 Nfd7 9.f4 f6 10.exf6 is also possible here, though less often seen) Rxd8 9.Bxc5 Nc6. Black's activity is believed to give sufficient compensation. White's most frequent play is to decline the gambit, and instead play 7.Nge2, and head for Benoni type positions after a d4–d5 advance.

5...0-0 6.Be3 Nc6 7.Nge2 a6 8.Qd2 Rb8 leads to the **Panno Variation** of the Sämisch. Black prepares to respond appropriately depending on White's choice of plan. If White plays 0-0-0 and goes for a kingside attack, then 7...a6 prepares ...b7–b5 with a counterattack against White's castled position. If instead White plays more cautiously, then Black challenges White's centre with ...e5.

### Averbakh Variation: 5.Be2 0-0 6.Bg5

The **Averbakh Variation** is 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2 0-0 6.Bg5 (named for **Yuri Averbakh**), which prevents the immediate 6...e5. Black usually repels the bishop with ...h6 giving him the option of a later g5, though in practice this is a weakening move. White has various ways to develop, such as Qd2, Nf3, f4 or even h4. However, Black obtains good play against all of these development schemes. The old main line in this begins with 6...c5, though 6...Nbd7 and 6...Na6 (**Judit Polgár's** move) are also seen.

Four Pawns Attack

### Four Pawns Attack: 5.f4

Main article: **King's Indian Defence, Four Pawns Attack**

The **Four Pawns Attack** continues with 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f4 0-0 6.Nf3. This is the most aggressive method for White, and was often seen in the 1920s. With his fifth move, White erects a massive centre at the price of falling behind in development. If Black can open the position, White may well find himself overextended. From this 6...c5 is the main line.

- 6...c5 7.d5 e6 8.Be2 exd5 9.cxd5
- 9...Bg4 has been a solid line for Black.
- 9...Re8 can be justified with solid play.
- 9...b5 is known to lead to sharp, dangerous play.

- 6...Na6 is known as the **Modern Variation**. This is a move anticipating playing ...Nc5 with counterplay. Has worked with success of neutral moves made from White, such as 7.Bd3. On the other hand, 7.e5 is the most aggressive plan.

Fianchetto Variation

### Fianchetto Variation: 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.g3

The **Fianchetto Variation** 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.g3 0-0 5.Bg2 d6 6.0-0, is named for White's development of his light squared bishop to g2, and is one of the most popular lines at the grandmaster level, with **Korchnoi** once its most notable practitioner. This method of development is on completely different lines than other King's Indian variations. Here, Black's normal plan of attack can hardly succeed, as White's kingside is more solidly defended than in most KID variations. The most common responses are:

- 6...Nbd7 with 8...exd4. Black intends to claim the centre with ...e7–e5. 7.Nc3 e5 8.e4 exd4 9.Nxd4 Re8 10.h3 a6. Preparation has been made for 11...Rb8, with ...c7–c5 and ...b7–b5, and sometimes with ...Ne5 first. This is known as the **Gallagher Variation** of the **Fianchetto Variation**.
  - 8...c6 and 8...a6 are alternatives.
- 6...Nc6 7.Nc3 a6 8.d5 Na5. This variation goes against ancient dogma which states that knights are not well placed on the rim; however, extra pressure is brought to bear against the Achilles Heel of the fianchetto lines—the weakness at c4. Hundreds of master games have continued with 9.Nd2 c5 10.Qc2 Rb8 11.b3 b5 12.Bb2 bxc4 13.bxc4 Bh6 14.f4 (14.e3 Bf5 is a trap that numbers **Mark Taimanov** among its victims;<sup>[3]</sup> white must now lose material, as he has no good interposition) e5!

### 8.3.3 Sidelines

Finally, White has other setups, such as Nf3 and h3 and Nge2 (with or without Bd3), but these are currently not as popular at the grandmaster level. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nge2 followed by 6.Ng3 is called the **Hungarian Attack**.

### 8.3.4 Famous games

The moves are shown for one of the most famous King's Indian games, a brilliancy by the late Ukrainian-American

grandmaster **Eduard Gufeld**, who called it his "**Mona Lisa**":

**Vladimir Bagirov–Eduard Gufeld, USSR championship 1973**

1.d4 g6 2.c4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.e4 Nf6 5.f3 0-0 6.Be3 Nc6 7.Nge2 Rb8 8.Qd2 a6 9.Bh6 b5 10.h4 e5 11.Bxg7 Kxg7 12.h5 Kh8 13.Nd5 bxc4 14.hxg6 fxg6 15.Qh6 Nh5 16.g4 Rxb2 17.gxh5 g5 18.Rg1 g4 19.0-0-0 Rxa2 20.Nef4 exf4 21.Nxf4 Rxf4 22.Qxf4 c3 23.Bc4 Ra3 24.fxg4 Nb4 25.Kb1 Be6 26.Bxe6 Nd3 27.Qf7 Qb8+ 28.Bb3 Rxb3+ 29.Kc2 Nb4+ 30.Kxb3 Nd5+ 31.Kc2 Qb2+ 32.Kd3 Qb5+ 0–1

### 8.3.5 ECO codes

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) classification of variations of the King's Indian are:

- E60 King's Indian Defence
- E61 King's Indian Defence, 3.Nc3
- E62 King's Indian, Fianchetto Variation
- E63 King's Indian, Fianchetto, **Panno** Variation
- E64 King's Indian, Fianchetto, Yugoslav system
- E65 King's Indian, Yugoslav, 7.0-0
- E66 King's Indian, Fianchetto, Yugoslav Panno
- E67 King's Indian, Fianchetto with ...Nbd7
- E68 King's Indian, Fianchetto, Classical Variation, 8.e4
- E69 King's Indian, Fianchetto, Classical Main line
- E70 King's Indian, 4.e4
- E71 King's Indian, Makogonov system (5.h3)
- E72 King's Indian with e4 & g3
- E73 King's Indian, 5.Be2
- E74 King's Indian, Averbakh, 6...c5
- E75 King's Indian, Averbakh, Main line
- E76 **King's Indian, Four Pawns Attack**
- E77 King's Indian, Four Pawns Attack, 6.Be2
- E78 King's Indian, Four Pawns Attack, with Be2 and Nf3
- E79 King's Indian, Four Pawns Attack, Main line

- E80 King's Indian, Sämisch Variation
- E81 King's Indian, Sämisch, 5...0-0
- E82 King's Indian, Sämisch, 6...b6
- E83 King's Indian, Sämisch, 6...Nc6
- E84 King's Indian, Sämisch, Panno Main line
- E85 King's Indian, Sämisch, Orthodox Variation
- E86 King's Indian, Sämisch, Orthodox, 7.Nge2 c6
- E87 King's Indian, Sämisch, Orthodox, 7.d5
- E88 King's Indian, Sämisch, Orthodox, 7.d5 c6
- E89 King's Indian, Sämisch, Orthodox Main line
- E90 King's Indian, 5.Nf3
- E91 King's Indian, 6.Be2
- E92 King's Indian, Classical Variation
- E93 King's Indian, Petrosian system, Main line
- E94 King's Indian, Orthodox Variation
- E95 King's Indian, Orthodox, 7...Nbd7, 8.Re1
- E96 King's Indian, Orthodox, 7...Nbd7, Main line
- E97 King's Indian, Orthodox, Aronin–Taimanov Variation (Yugoslav Attack / Mar del Plata Variation)
- E98 King's Indian, Orthodox, Aronin–Taimanov, 9.Ne1
- E99 King's Indian, Orthodox, Aronin–Taimanov, Main

### 8.3.6 References

- [1] Gallagher, Joe (2004). *Play the King's Indian*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-324-0.
- [2] Cherniaev, Alexander; Prokuronov, Eduard (February 12, 2008). *The Sämisch King's Indian Uncovered*. Everyman Chess.
- [3] [http://www.365chess.com/view\\_game.php?g=2427799](http://www.365chess.com/view_game.php?g=2427799)

### 8.3.7 Further reading

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- Panczyk, Krzysztof; Ilczuk, Jacek (2009). *The Classical King's Indian Uncovered*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1857445171.

### 8.3.8 External links

- Chess Siberia: King's Indian Defence. Saemisch System
- Vladimir Bagirov–Eduard Gufeld, USSR championship 1973 “The Mona Lisa” at chessgames.com

## 8.4 King's Indian Defence, Four Pawns Attack

The **Four Pawns Attack** in the **King's Indian Defence** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 g6
3. Nc3 Bg7
4. e4 d6
5. f4

White immediately builds up a large **pawn centre** in order to gain a **spatial** advantage. Black first develops his pieces, then tries to attack White's centre by means of the pawn advances ...e7–e5, ...c7–c5 or ...f7–f5, depending on circumstances.

The main variations of the Four Pawns Attack are:

- The main line 5...0-0 6.Nf3 c5, when after 7.d5 Black can attack White's centre with the pawn **sacrifice** 7...b5 or the quieter 7...e6. The latter can **transpose** into the **Modern Benoni**.
- The modern alternative 5...0-0 6.Nf3 Na6!? aims at sacrificing a pawn with 7...e5 and going into tactical complications.

The relevant *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* codes are E76 through E79.

### 8.4.1 The main line

After 6...c5 7.d5 e6 8.Be2 exd5 9.cxd5

The main line of the Four Pawns Attack after 6...c5 7.d5 continuing 7...e6 8.Be2 exd5 9.cxd5 now gives Black a choice of the old main line with 9...Re8 or the new main line with 9...Bg4.

#### Old main line with 9...Re8

Highly tactical possibilities abound in which the critical position occurs after 10.e5 dxe5 11.fxe5 Ng4 12.Bg5, a position which is perhaps better avoided by Black.<sup>[1]</sup> After 12...Qb6 13.0-0 Nxe5 14.Nxe5 Bxe5 15.Qd2 Bf5 white was not able to achieve any significant advantage.

#### New main line with 9...Bg4

A common-sense move with the idea of exchanging the bishop for the knight and taking the energy out of White's e5 attacking plan.<sup>[2]</sup> The development of the bishop also frees Black's queenside for smooth development and active play.<sup>[2]</sup> Invariably, development continues with 10.0-0 Nbd7 when White faces the possibility of **kicking** the bishop with h3 or delaying with Re1 first.<sup>[3]</sup> In the game **Jesus Nogueiras–Garry Kasparov**, White opted for the immediate kick, 11.h3 Bxf3 12.Bxf3 Re8 in a game that was eventually drawn.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### White varies on move 7, 8 or 9

- White can vary with 7.dxc5 or 7.Be2; this allows Black to equalize with accurate play.
- Of the various alternatives at move eight, 8.dxe6 opening the d5-square has gained interest.<sup>[5]</sup> The reply 8...Bxe6 leaves White a possible f5 push at an appropriate moment, so normally 8...fxe6 is played when White has a choice of the solid 9.Be2 or the aggressive 9.Bd3.<sup>[5]</sup>
- 9.exd5. Although once common, the f4-pawn looks out of place and White's weakness on e4 is clear.<sup>[6]</sup> White varying with 9.e5 has a certain logic to quicken the centre play, however the reply 9...Ne4 seems to adequately halt the plan.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### The sacrifice 7...b5

Having similar ideas to the **Benko Gambit**, this b5 push remains uncharted.<sup>[7]</sup> After 8.cxb5 (8.e5 is to be considered) 8...a6, White has choices between the possibility of taking the a-pawn, or supporting the pawn on b5.<sup>[7]</sup> The more common response is to support with 9.a4.<sup>[7]</sup>

### 8.4.2 The modern alternative 6...Na6!?

Position after 6...Na6!?

Black first develops one additional piece before reacting in the centre. The idea is to bring in the push e7–e5 instead of the main line c7–c5. This is a **gambit** in which Black hopes to take advantage of the slight underdevelopment of White forces in order to win back the sacrificed pawn or to directly attack the white king. The move ...Na6 is designed post on c5 (once the d4-pawn has left) in order to attack the e4-pawn. An important difference between this move and Nbd7 is that Na6 does not block the queenside bishop.<sup>[8]</sup>

After the normal 7.Be2, Black must immediately unleash 7...e5!? when White has several possibilities, but only a capture on e5 is assumed to make sense:

- 8.0-0 is not well considered for White because of the hidden tactical idea 8...exd4 9.Nxd4 Nc5 10.Bf3 Re8 11.Re1 Bg4! when White cannot win the piece on g4 without losing the Nd4 (by the Bg7).
- 8.fxe5 dxe5 9.Nxe5 is considered dubious but is better than its reputation, e.g. 9...c5 10.Be3 cxd4 11.Bxd4 Qe7?! (Gallagher) 12.Nf3! and White is a full pawn up because Black cannot recapture the e4-pawn without running into trouble: 12...Nxe4? 13.Bxg7 Kxg7 14.Qd4+ Nf6 15.Nd5 Qd6 16.Ng5! and White wins.
- 8.fxe5 dxe5 9.Nxe4 c5 d5 is considered slightly dubious due to Nxe4! and Black is fine after Nxe4 Bxe5.
- 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.Nxe5 (9.Qxd8 is considered slightly inferior because it develops Black's Rf8) 9...Nc5 10.Bf3 Qxd1+ 11.Kxd1 Rd8+ 12.Kc2 Nfxe4! (a temporary piece sacrifice, e.g. game Hansen–Berg, Aarhus 1991) 13.Nxe4 Bf5 14.Re1 Bxe5 15.fxe5 Rd4 (thus Black regains his piece) 16.b3! Nxe4 17.Kb2 Nc5 when White still has a slight advantage thanks to good diagonals for his bishop pair, but Black controls the d-file and can try to pressure the e5-pawn.
- 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.fxe5? is bad because Black can gain back the e5-pawn and leave White with a poor pawn structure.

### 8.4.3 Black varies on move 5

Black can also vary with 5...c5, electing to strike at the White centre before castling and discouraging any 6.e5 ideas from White. Teimour Radjabov, perhaps the leading contemporary practitioner of the King's Indian Defence, has been known to play this line. If 6.dxc5, Black can answer with ...Qa5, effectively forking the pawns at e4 and c5, regaining the material with a stronger centre and a lead in development. Generally, Black will follow up with 7...Qxc5, preventing White from castling at least temporarily and taking control of the sensitive g1–a7 diagonal, given that White has moved his f-pawn. If after 6...Qa5 White plays the materialistic 7.cxd6? then Black has 7...Nxe4 with advantage.

### 8.4.4 Notes

[1] Crouch 1992, p.6

[2] Crouch 1992, p.13

[3] Crouch 1992, p.16

[4] Crouch 1992, p.17

[5] Crouch 1992, p.24

[6] Crouch 1992, p.22

[7] Crouch 1992, p.27

[8] Crouch 1992, p.33

## 8.4.5 References

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## 8.5 East Indian Defence

The **East Indian Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. Nf3 g6<sup>[1]</sup>

### 8.5.1 Description

This opening has a close kinship to the more-common **King's Indian Defence** and is often considered a variant thereof. The difference is that White has not yet played c4, and therefore retains some options.

If White plays an early c4, the opening will transpose into a King's Indian. It is also possible for White to support an early e4 advance, transposing into the **Pirc Defence**. Unless transposition is reached, there are four popular, independent continuations:

- 3.g3 (the **Przepiórka** variation, closely related to the **Fianchetto Variation** of the King's Indian)
- 3.Bg5 (the **Torre** system, which may be considered a variant of the **Torre Attack**)
- 3.Bf4 (the **London** system)
- 3.Nc3 (the **Barry Attack**)<sup>[2]</sup>

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* classifies the East Indian Defence under A49 for the **Przepiórka** variation and A48 for the others.

### 8.5.2 Fianchetto without c4

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.g3 is the **King's Indian, Fianchetto without c4**. This can also be reached by 1.Nf3 lines. Black almost always plays 3...Bg7. White can play 4.c4 or 4.Bg2. After 4.Bg2, Black can play ...0-0, ...d5, or ...d6. 4...d5 gives the Neo-Grünfeld Defence with 5.c4 or 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4. 4...d6 is the same as 4...0-0 with 5.c4 0-0 or 5.0-0 0-0.

After 4...0-0, White can play 5.c4 or 5.0-0.

With move 5.0-0, Black can play ...d6 or ...d5. 5...d5 gives the Neo-Grünfeld Defence after 6.c4.

With move 5...d6, White will usually play 6.c4 for the Fianchetto Variation, but other moves are possible.

### 8.5.3 Example game

Smyslov vs Sax, 1979

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7 4.0-0 0-0 5.d4 d6 6.Nc3 Nbd7 7.e4 e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.b3 b6 10.a4 Bb7 11.Nd2 Re8 12.Ba3 Bf8 13.Bxf8 Nxf8 14.Nc4 Ne6 15.Re1 Qd4 16.Nd5 Kg7 17.Qf3 Bxd5 18.exd5 e4 19.Qd1 Nxd5 20.Bxe4 Rad8 21.Bxd5 Qxd5 22.Qxd5 Rxd5 23.Rad1 Red8 24.Rxd5 Rxd5 25.Kg2 Kf6 26.Ne3 Rd2 27.Ng4 Ke7 28.Ne3 Kd7 29.Rd1 Rxd1 30.Nxd1 Nd4 31.Ne3 Kd6 32.h4 Kc5 33.Kf1 Kb4 34.Ke1 Kc3 35.Kd1 c6 36.Kc1 Nf3 37.Nc4 f5 38.Nb2 f4 39.Nc4 Nd4 40.Ne5 fxg3 41.fxg3 c5 42.a5 Nxc2 43.axb6 axb6 44.Nd7 Nd4 45.Nxb6 Ne2 46.Kd1 Nxc3 47.Nd7 Kb4 48.Kc2 Nf5 49.Nf8 Nxb4 50.Nxb7 Nf5 51.Nf6 Nd4 52.Kd3 Kxb3 53.Nd7 Ne6 54.Ne5 g5 0-1

### 8.5.4 References

- [1] World Correspondence Chess Federation, <http://www.ecwccf.com/eco.htm>
- [2] Kenilworth Chess Club, <http://www.kenilworthchessclub.org/kenilworthian/2005/11/barry-attack-bibliography.html>

## 8.6 Grünfeld Defence

The **Grünfeld Defence** (ECO codes D70–D99) is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 g6
3. Nc3 d5

The opening relies on one of the main principles of the hypermodern school, which was coming to the fore in the 1920s—that a large pawn centre could be a liability rather than an asset.

### 8.6.1 History

The first instance of this opening is in an 1855 game by **Moheschunder Bannerjee**, an Indian player who had transitioned from **Indian chess** rules, playing Black against **John Cochrane** in Calcutta, in May 1855:

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.e3 Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Be2 Nxc3 8.bxc3 c5 9.0-0 cxd4 10.cxd4 Nc6 11.Bb2 Bg4 12.Rc1 Rc8 13.Ba3 Qa5 14.Qb3 Rfe8 15.Rc5 Qb6 16.Rb5 Qd8 17.Ng5 Bxe2 18.Nxf7 Na5

and White **mates** in three (19.Nh6+ **double check** Kh8 20.Qg8+ Rxg8 21.Nf7#).<sup>[1][2]</sup> Cochrane published a book reporting his games with Moheshchunder and other Indians in 1864.

It gained popularity after **Ernst Grünfeld** introduced it into international play at Vienna 1922, where, in his first game with the defense, he defeated future world champion **Alexander Alekhine**.<sup>[3]</sup> Grünfeld usually employed a very classical style. The defence was later adopted by a number of prominent players, including Vasily Smyslov, Viktor Korchnoi, Leonid Stein, and Bobby Fischer. Garry Kasparov often used the defence, including in his **World Championship** matches against **Anatoly Karpov** in 1986, 1987 and 1990, and **Vladimir Kramnik** in 2000. Currently active notable players who employ the opening include Loek van

Wely, Peter Svidler, Peter Leko, Viswanathan Anand, Luke McShane and Gata Kamsky.<sup>[4]</sup> Anand employed it twice in the World Chess Championship 2010. In the World Chess Championship 2012 between Anand and Boris Gelfand, each player used the Grünfeld once with both games ending in draws. Anand faced the Grünfeld against Magnus Carlsen during the first game of the World Chess Championship 2014 and drew in a Rook and Queen ending.

The Game of the Century between Donald Byrne and 13-year-old Bobby Fischer on October 17, 1956, featured this opening, although arriving in the Grünfeld via a transposition of moves (using 1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.d4 0-0 5.Bf4 d5).

## 8.6.2 Exchange Variation: 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4

### Exchange Variation

The main line of the Grünfeld, the **Exchange Variation** (ECO codes D85–D89), is defined by the continuation **4.cxd5 Nxd5 5. e4**. Now White has an imposing looking centre – and the main continuation **5... Nxc3 6. bxc3** strengthens it still further. Black generally attacks White's centre with ...c5 and ...Bg7, often followed by moves such as ...cxd4, ...Bg4, and ...Nc6. White often uses his big centre to launch an attack against Black's king. One subvariation, frequently played by Karpov, including four games of his 1987 world championship match against Kasparov in Seville, Spain, is the Seville Variation, after 6...Bg7 7.Bc4 c5 8.Ne2 Nc6 9.Be3 0-0 10.0-0 Bg4 11.f3 Na5 12.Bxf7+, long thought a poor move by theory, as the resultant light-square weakness had been believed to give Black more than enough compensation for the pawn.

White can develop his pieces in a number of ways in the Exchange Variation. For decades, theory held that the correct method of development was with Bc4 and Ne2, often followed by 0-0 and f4–f5, playing for a central breakthrough or kingside attack. It was generally thought that an early Nf3 was weak in the Exchange Variation because it allowed Black too much pressure on the centre with ...Bg4. In the late 1970s, however, Karpov, Kasparov and others found different methods to play the Exchange Variation with White, often involving an early Rb1 to remove the rook from the sensitive a1–h8 diagonal, as well as attempting to hinder the development of Black's queenside. Another, relatively recently developed system involves quickly playing Be3, Qd2, and Rc1 or Rd1 to fortify White's centre, remove White's rook from the diagonal, and possibly enable an early d5 push by White.

Vladimir Kramnik and Boris Gelfand are the leading practitioners as White, and Lubomír Ftáčnik has had many fine

results with the black pieces.<sup>[4]</sup>

## 8.6.3 Russian System: 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3

### Russian System 5.Qb3

In bringing more pressure to bear against Black's central outpost on d5, White practically forces ...dxc4, thus gaining a central preponderance; however, in return, his queen will often be exposed as Black's queenside play unfolds in the middlegame. After **5... dxc4 6. Qxc4 0-0 7. e4**, Black has several primary options:

### Hungarian Variation: 7...a6

The Hungarian Variation, 7...a6, has been championed by Peter Leko.

### Smyslov Variation: 7...Bg4 8.Be3 Nfd7

7...Bg4 8.Be3 Nfd7 was a topical line from the 1950s through the mid-1970s.

### Prins Variation: 7...Na6

7...Na6 (Lodewijk Prins') idea, which Kasparov favoured in several of his World Championship matches against Karpov.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 7...Nc6

This is recommended as the mainline by several recent Grünfeld texts.

### Other lines

7...c6, 7...b6

## 8.6.4 Taimanov's Variation with 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bg5

### Taimanov 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bg5

In this line, favoured by Yasser Seirawan, after the nearly universal 5...Ne4, White may play 6.Bh4 Nxc3 7.bxc3 or 6.cxd5, with Black then opting for either 6...Nxc3 7.bxc3 Qxd5 or 6...Nxc3 7.Nxc3 e6, though in the latter case, 7...c6 is sometimes tried. If 6. Nxd5 grabbing the pawn,

...e6 loses a piece. After 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Nxd5 e6, White has 8.Qd2 exd5 9.Qe3+, with attacking chances, or the more usual 8.Nf3 exd5 (though the interpolation 8...h6 9.Nf3 exd5 is a significant alternative), after which play generally proceeds on lines analogous to the **Queen's Gambit Declined**, Exchange Variation, with a queenside minority attack by White (b2–b4–b5xc6), as Black aims for his traditional kingside play with ...f7–f5–f4 and, in this case, ...g6–g5.

### 8.6.5 Lines with 4.Bf4 and the Grünfeld Gambit

4.Bf4

For players who do not wish to take on the complexities of the Exchange Variation, the move **4. Bf4** is generally considered a safer continuation for White.<sup>[6]</sup> White opts for the initiative on the queenside with a smaller pawn center. In the main line (D82), play proceeds with 4...Bg7 5.e3 c5 6.dxc5 Qa5, with White's choices at his seventh move being cxd5, Qb3, Qa4, or Rc1. Despite its reputation, in statistical databases this variation shows only a slightly higher percentage of White wins and draws, as opposed to the Exchange variation.<sup>[7][8]</sup> The variation is not often met in top-flight play today, its usage having declined significantly since its heyday in the 1930s.

Grünfeld Gambit

In this variation, play may also continue 4.Bf4 Bg7 5.e3 0-0, which is known as the **Grünfeld Gambit** (ECO code D83). White can accept the gambit by playing 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Nxd5 Qxd5 8.Bxc7, or decline it with 6.Qb3 or 6.Rc1, to which Black responds with 6...c5.

### 8.6.6 Neo-Grünfeld Defence

Neo-Grünfeld Defence, Kemerli Variation

Systems in which White delays the development of his queen's knight to c3 are known as the **Neo-Grünfeld Defence** (ECO code D70–D79); typical move orders are 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 d5 or, more commonly, **1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. g3 d5** (the latter is known as the *Kemerli Variation*, shown in the diagram).

### 8.6.7 Illustrative game

Smyslov vs. Fischer, Herceg Novi Blitz Tournament, 1970:<sup>[9]</sup>

1.c4 g6 2.g3 Bg7 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.Nf3 0-0 5.0-0 c6 6.d4 d5 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.Nc3 Ne4 9.Qb3 Nc6 10.Be3 Na5 11.Qd1 Nxc3 12.bxc3 b6 13.Ne5 Ba6 14.Re1 Rc8 15.Bd2 e6 16.e4 Bb7 17.exd5 Bxd5 18.Bxd5 Qxd5 19.Qe2 Rfd8 20.Ng4 Nc4 21.Bh6 f5 22.Bxg7 Kxg7 23.Ne3 Nxe3 24.Qxe3 Rc6 25.Rac1 Rdc8 26.c4 Rxc4 27.Rxc4 Rxc4 28.Qxe6 Qxe6 29.Rxe6 Kf7 30.Re3 Rxd4 31.Ra3 a5 32.Rc3 Ke6 33.Kg2 Kd6 34.h4 Ra4 35.Rc2 b5 36.Kf3 b4 37.Ke3 Kd5 38.f3 Ra3+ 39.Kf4 a4 40.g4 fxg4 41.fxg4 b3 42.axb3 axb3 43.Rc7 Ra4+ 44.Kg5 Rb4 45.Rc1 Kd4 46.Kh6 Rb7 0-1

### 8.6.8 Other variations

Apart from the above, among the more popular continuations are:

- 4.Bg5 (Taimanov Variation) ECO D80
- 4.Qb3 (Accelerated Russian System) ECO D81
- 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qa4+ (Flohr Variation) ECO D90
- 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.e3 (Quiet System or Slow System) ECO D94
- 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Na4 (Nadanian Variation) ECO D85

### 8.6.9 See also

- [List of chess openings](#)
- [List of chess openings named after people](#)

### 8.6.10 References

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- [3] William Hartston, *The Grünfeld Defence*, Chess Digest, 1971, p. 125.
- [4] “Chessgames.com – Searchable database”. Retrieved 2007-04-30.
- [5] <http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/24th-july-1999/50/chess>
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- [7] “Chessgames – Exchange variation”. Retrieved 2007-04-30.
- [8] “Chessgames – 4.Bf4”. Retrieved 2007-04-30.
- [9] <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1044694>

### 8.6.11 Further reading

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- Alexey Suetin, *The Complete Grünfeld* (Batsford, 1991)
- Anatoly Karpov, *Beating the Grünfeld* (Batsford, 1992)
- Jonathan Rowson, *Understanding the Grünfeld* (Gambit, 1998)
- Jacob Aagaard, *Starting Out: The Grünfeld* (Everyman Chess, 2000)
- Nigel Davies, *The Grünfeld Defence* (Everyman Chess, 2002)
- Bogdan Lalić, *The Grünfeld for the Attacking Player* (Batsford, 2002)
- Michael Khodarkovsky, *The Grünfeld Defence Revealed* (Batsford, 2003)
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- Konstantin Sakaev, *An Expert's Guide to the 7.Bc4 Gruenfeld* (Chess Stars, 2006)
- Yelena Dembo, *Play the Grünfeld* (Everyman Chess, 2007)
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- Delchev, Aleksander; Agrest, Evgenij (2011). *The Safest Grünfeld*. Chess Stars. ISBN 978-954-8782-81-4.

### 8.6.12 External links

- Online Guide to the Grünfeld
- Chessgames: Grünfeld Gambit
- Chessgames: Neo-Grünfeld 3.f3
- Chessgames: Neo-Grünfeld 3.g3

## 8.7 Grünfeld Defence, Nadebian Variation

The **Nadebian Variation** (sometimes called the **Nadebian Attack**) of the Grünfeld Defence is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 g6
3. Nc3 d5
4. cxd5 Nxd5
5. Na4

The Nadebian Variation is classified in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) with the code D85.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 8.7.1 History

The variation is named after the Armenian International Master Ashot Nadebian, who first employed it in 1996. His analysis was published in the 67th volume of *Chess Informant*.

The birth of the variation has caused major ripples in the chess world. One of the world's most authoritative chess editions *New in Chess Yearbook* printed on the front cover of the 45th volume the following: “A Revolution in the Gruenfeld: 5.Na4!?!”.<sup>[2]</sup> Grandmaster Jonathan Rowson wrote in his book *Understanding the Grünfeld* that Nadebian “should be congratulated for seeing what everyone has seen, and thinking what nobody had thought”.<sup>[3]</sup>

The famous chess theoretician, Grandmaster Igor Zaitsev in 64 Russian chess magazine wrote:

The continuation 5.Na4 of Armenian chess player Nadebian shakes by the extraordinariness. Yes, extraordinariness, because it is unusual among the unusual. A voluntary removal of the knight from the centre, yet that has gone on advantage? Therefore, the value of such centrifugal maneuver is beyond a simple theoretical novelty, in a certain measure it is a challenge to chess foundations, an attempt to grope new properties in two-dimensional chess space.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 8.7.2 Theory

White's fifth move is overprotecting the key c5-square in the Grünfeld Defence, thus aspires to prevent an attack on the pawn centre by c7–c5. The extravagancy of White's idea is

that they break at once two opening principles: avoid moving the same piece twice, and avoid placing a knight on the edge of the board. However, according to Nadanian,<sup>[4]</sup> the position after the fifth move is an exception to the rules. By placing the knight on a4, White takes under control the critical square c5, and by next move 6.e4 will return a tempo back, as Black too will play an already developed piece (knight on d5).

White should aspire to the following arrangement: e4, Be3, Be2, Nf3, 0-0, Rc1, Nc5. Black in turn should not allow this scheme for what it is necessary for them to put pressure on the d4 pawn.<sup>[5]</sup>

The main line continues 5...Bg7 6.e4 Nb6 (Avrukh's 6...Nb4 is also interesting) 7.Be3 0-0 8.Nf3 Bg4 (instead 8...Nxa4 9.Qxa4 c5 10.Rd1 Qb6 11.Rd2 was good for White in Korchnoi–Sutovsky, Dresden 1998) 9.Be2 Nc6 10.d5 Ne5 11.Nxe5 Bxe2 12.Qxe2 Nxa4 with approximately equal chances.

Another possible line is 5...e5 6.dxe5 Nc6 (suggested by Igor Zaitsev and first played by Mikhailchishin), which is according to Lubomir Kavalek “perhaps the only way to punish the white knight's venture to the edge of the board”.<sup>[6]</sup> After 7.a3 (Nadanian's idea) 7...Bf5 8.Nf3 Qd7 9.e3 0-0-0 10.Be2 (Eingorn gives 10.Bb5 Qe6) 10...Qe7 11.Qb3 Bg7 according to Yelena Dembo Black has a powerful initiative (Kantsler–Avrukh, Israel 1999).<sup>[7]</sup>

### 8.7.3 Use

The variation's most devoted practitioner has been its eponym, Ashot Nadanian. Various famous players such as Swiss Grandmaster Viktor Korchnoi, Chinese Supergrandmaster Bu Xiangzhi, American GM Walter Browne, Scottish GM Jonathan Rowson, Russian GM Andrei Kharlov, Israeli GM Vitali Golod and Croatian GM Bogdan Lalić have employed it at some time or another, though few have made it their main line against the Grünfeld Defence.

### 8.7.4 Example games

- Ashot Nadanian (2375) – Yannick Pelletier (2470), Cannes op 18th 1997; D90  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Na4 Bg7 6.Nf3 0-0 7.e4 Nb6 8.Be2 Nxa4 9.Qxa4 b6 10.Be3 Bb7 11.Qc2 Nd7 12.Rd1 e6 13.0-0 h6 14.Bb5 c6 15.Bxc6 Rc8 16.d5 Nb8 17.Qc1 exd5 18.exd5 Nxc6 19.dxc6 Qf6 20.Bxh6 Bxc6 21.Bxg7 Kxg7 22.Qg5 Bxf3 23.Qxf6+ Kxf6 24.gxf3 Rc2 ½–½
- Viktor Korchnoi (2625) – Emil Sutovsky (2595), Dresden zt 1.2 1998; D85  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Na4 Bg7

6.e4 Nb6 7.Be3 0-0 8.Nf3 Nxa4 9.Qxa4 c5 10.Rd1 Qb6 11.Rd2 Bd7 12.Qa3 cxd4 13.Nxd4 Qc7 14.Be2 e5 15.Rc2 Qd8 16.Nb5 Nc6 17.Nd6 Qb8 18.Bc4 Nd4 19.Bxd4 exd4 20.0-0 Be6 21.Bxe6 fxe6 22.Rfc1 Be5 23.Rc7 Bxd6 24.Qxd6 Rf7 25.Qxe6 1–0

- Smbat Lputian (2598) – Alexei Shirov (2746), Montecatini Terme 2000; D85  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Na4 e5 6.dxe5 Nc6 7.Nf3 Ndb4 8.Bg5 Qxd1+ 9.Kxd1 Be6 10.Nc3 Bg7 11.a3 Nd5 12.e4 Nxc3+ 13.bxc3 Nxe5 14.Nxe5 Bxe5 15.Kc2 h6 16.Be3 0-0-0 17.f4 Bg7 18.Be2 Rhe8 19.Rhe1 Bd7 20.Bf3 Ba4+ 21.Kb2 Bc6 22.e5 Bxf3 23.gxf3 Kd7 24.h4 Ke6 25.h5 Kf5 26.Kc2 g5 27.Rg1 gxf4 28.Bxf4 Bxe5 29.Bxh6 Bf6 30.Rad1 Rxd1 31.Rxd1 Rh8 32.Be3 Rxh5 33.Rd7 Be5 34.Rxf7+ Ke6 35.Rf8 Bd6 36.Ra8 a5 37.a4 b6 38.Re8+ Kd5 39.Re4 Rh3 40.Bf4 Rxf3 41.Rd4+ Kc5 42.Bxd6+ cxd6 43.Kb3 d5 44.Rh4 ½–½
- Bu Xiangzhi (2607) – Krishnan Sasikiran (2657), Dos Hermanas Internet Chess Club 2005; D85  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Na4 e5 6.dxe5 Nc6 7.a3 Nxe5 8.e4 Nb6 9.Qxd8+ Kxd8 10.Bg5+ Be7 11.0-0-0+ Ke8 12.Bf4 Bd6 13.Nxb6 axb6 14.Kc2 Bd7 15.Bxe5 Bxe5 16.Nf3 Bf6 17.Bc4 Ba4+ 18.Bb3 Bc6 19.Bd5 Ke7 20.e5 Bg7 21.Bxc6 bxc6 22.Nd4 c5 23.Nc6+ Ke6 24.f4 Ra4 25.g3 b5 26.Rhe1 Rha8 27.Nd8+ Ke7 28.e6 f5 29.Rd7+ 1–0
- Igor Lysyj (2590) – Alexander Morozevich (2762), TCh–RUS Sochi 2007; D85  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Na4 Bg7 6.e4 Nb6 7.Be3 0-0 8.Nf3 Bg4 9.Be2 Nxa4 10.Qxa4 c5 11.dxc5 Bxb2 12.Rb1 Bc3+ 13.Nd2 Bxd2+ 14.Bxd2 Bxe2 15.Kxe2 Nc6 16.Be3 Qc7 17.g3 Rad8 18.Rhd1 Qc8 19.Rxd8 Rxd8 20.Rd1 Rxd1 21.Qxd1 Qg4+ 22.f3 Qh3 23.Bf2 Qxh2 24.Qd7 Kg7 25.Qxb7 Nd4+ 26.Ke3 e5 27.Qe7 Qh5 28.g4 Qh2 29.Kd3 Ne6 30.Be3 Qxa2 31.g5 Qb3+ 32.Kd2 Qb2+ 33.Kd3 a5 34.c6 Qb5+ 35.Kd2 a4 36.f4 Qb2+ 37.Kd1 exf4 38.Bc1 Qd4+ 39.Ke1 Qxe4+ 40.Kd1 Qf3+ 41.Ke1 Qc3+ 42.Kd1 f3 43.Bd2 Qa1+ 44.Kc2 f2 0–1

### 8.7.5 Modified versions

There are also modified versions of Nadanian's idea.

- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.Na4 – **Improved Nadanian**<sup>[8]</sup> or **Deferred Nadanian**<sup>[9]</sup>
- 1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 c5 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.0-0 Nc6 5.d4 cxd4 6.Nxd4 Na5 – **Reversed Nadanian**<sup>[10]</sup>

- 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.f3 c5 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.Na4 – **Neo-Nadanian**<sup>[11]</sup>

### 8.7.6 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 8.7.7 Notes and references

- [1] Pope, Jacques N. “Openings classified under ECO D70–D99”. Chess Archaeology. Retrieved 2009-06-27.
- [2] “New in Chess Yearbook vol. 45. A Revolution in the Grünfeld”. Open Library. Retrieved 2009-06-27.
- [3] Rowson 1998, p. 56.
- [4] 64 (chess magazine) 10/1998 (Russian)
- [5] Aschot Nadanjan “Die Superprophylaxe 5.Sa4 im Grünfeldinder”, *Kaissiber*, No. 3, Juli–September 1997, pp. 60–63 (German)
- [6] Kavalek, Lubomir (2010-01-04). “Chess”. The Washington Post. Retrieved 11 January 2010.
- [7] Dembo 2007, p. 83.
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### 8.7.8 Further reading

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- Mosconi, Tiziano (2010). *Refutation of the Nadanian Variation of the Grünfeld Defence*. Lulu.

### 8.7.9 External links

- Bill Wall’s list of opening variations
- Nadanian Variation at New in Chess
- Article about Nadanian Variation written by GM Igor Zaitsev (Russian)
- 118 Games at Chess.com
- *Refutation of the Nadanian Variation of the Grünfeld Defence* by Tiziano Mosconi at Lulu.com

## 8.8 Queen’s Indian Defense

The **Queen’s Indian Defense**<sup>[1]</sup> (QID) is a chess opening defined by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nf3 b6

The opening is a solid defense to the Queen’s Pawn Game.<sup>[2]</sup> 3...b6 increases Black’s control over the central light squares e4 and d5 by preparing to fianchetto the queen’s bishop, with the opening deriving its name from this maneuver. As in the other Indian defenses, Black attempts to control the center with pieces, instead of occupying it with pawns in classical style.

By playing 3.Nf3, White sidesteps the **Nimzo-Indian Defense** that arises after 3.Nc3 Bb4. The Queen's Indian is regarded as the sister opening of the Nimzo-Indian, since both openings aim to impede White's efforts to gain full control of the center by playing e2–e4. Together, they form one of Black's most well-respected responses to 1.d4.

### 8.8.1 Main line: 4.g3

**4. g3** (E15–E19) has long been White's most popular line against the Queen's Indian. It contests the long diagonal by preparing to fianchetto the light-squared bishop. The standard response for Black through the 1970s was 4...Bb7, but 4...Ba6 has since become the topical line. A rarer third option is 4...Bb4+, which aims to exchange the less useful dark-squared bishop, though this line tends to leave Black with a slightly passive position.

#### Modern main line: 4...Ba6

White can defend the pawn at c4 with a piece by playing 5.Nbd2, 5.Qa4, 5.Qc2 or 5.Qb3, but these moves all diminish control of d4, making ...c7–c5 an effective reply for Black; therefore **5. b3** is White's most common response.<sup>[3]</sup> However, it weakens the dark squares slightly, which Black can take advantage of by playing **5...Bb4+**. Now 6.Nbd2? loses material after 6...Bc3 7.Rb1 Bb7 threatening 8...Be4, an opening trap which has ensnared players such as **Kamran Shirazi**.<sup>[4]</sup> White's best move is therefore **6. Bd2**. However, after **6...Be7 7. Bg2 c6** Black is ready to play ...d7–d5, again attacking the c-pawn. If White plays cxd5 then ...cxd5 is considered to equalize for Black. Thus White usually plays **8. Bc3** to clear this square, and the main line continues **8...d5 9. Ne5 Nfd7 10. Nxd7 Nxd7 11. Nd2 0-0 12. 0-0** to maintain central tension. The effect of Black's check has been to lure White's bishop to c3 where it blocks the c-file. This, the current main line of the Queen's Indian, is considered equal by theory and became a frequent guest in grandmaster praxis in the 1980s.

After **5. b3**, Black also has several playable alternatives to 5...Bb4+, the most common of which is **5...Bb7 6. Bg2 Bb4+ 7. Bd2 a5**. When White plays Nc3, Black will exchange bishop for knight in order to enhance his control over the central light squares, and play on the queenside with moves such as ...a5–a4 and ...b5. Other possibilities for Black include 5...d5 and 5...b5.

More recently, several grandmasters, including **Alexander Beliavsky**, **Ni Hua**, **Veselin Topalov**, and **Magnus Carlsen**, have played **5. Qc2**. The idea is to allow Black's counterthrust ...c5, the main line running **5...Bb7 6. Bg2 c5**. The fashion is for White to sacrifice a pawn with **7. d5**, gaining active play. This idea has scored well for White,<sup>[5]</sup>

and new ideas have been cropping up since 2008.<sup>[6]</sup> The 5.Qc2 lines had previously scored poorly for White according to Emms.<sup>[3]</sup>

#### Old main line: 4...Bb7

The classical main line of the Queen's Indian, the most frequently played line from the 1950s until 4...Ba6 became popular in the 1980s, usually continues: **5. Bg2 Be7 6. 0-0 0-0 7. Nc3 Ne4 8. Qc2 Nxc3 9. Qxc3**. White has a spatial advantage, but Black has no weaknesses and can choose from a variety of ways to create counterplay, such as **9...c5**, **9...f5** or **9...Be4**. These lines are well known for their **drawish** tendencies and **4...Bb7** is nowadays often employed by Black as a drawing weapon. White has tried various deviations from the main line in an attempt to unbalance the play. These include:

- **8. Bd2**, which defends the knight on c3 and threatens a d4–d5 push.
- **7. d5!?**, introduced by **Arturo Pomar**, and rejuvenated by **Lev Polugaevsky's** continuation **7...exd5 8. Nh4** threatening to regain the pawn on d5 or to play Nf5.
- **6. Nc3**, which postpones castling in favor of preparing action in the center with the d4–d5 and e2–e4 thrusts.

### 8.8.2 Other lines

#### 4.a3

The Petrosian Variation, prepares 5.Nc3 without being harassed by ...Bb4 pinning the knight. See Gurevich (1992) for an extensive analysis. This variation was often used by **Garry Kasparov** early in his career.

#### 4.Nc3

Black can choose between 4...Bb7 and 4...Bb4.

- **4...Bb7 5. a3** became the more common move order to reach the Petrosian system by the mid-1980s, where White has avoided **4. a3 c5 5. d5 Ba6** and **4. a3 Ba6**.
- **4...Bb7 5. Bg5** is an older line which gives Black good equalizing chances after **5...h6 6. Bh4 g5 7. Bg3 Nh5 8. e3 Nxc3 9. hxc3 Bg7**.

After 4.Nc3 Bb7 5.Bg5 Be7, White can play 6.e3 or 6.Qc2.

4. Nc3 Bb4 is a Queen's Indian / Nimzo-Indian line (also 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3 b6). Moves for White include 5.Bg5,

5.e3, and 5.Qb3. After 5.Bg5, Black may play 5...Bb7 or 5...h6. 4. Nc3 Bb4 5.e3 is a Nimzo-Indian / Queen's Indian line. With move 5.e3, Black usually plays 5...Bb7. After 5.Qb3, Black usually plays 5...c5.

- 4.Nc3 Bb4 5.Bg5 Bb7 (also 4.Nc3 Bb7 5.Bg5 Bb4). White can play 6.e3, then Black usually plays 6...h6, although 6.Nd2 or 6.Qc2 may be better.
- 4.Nc3 Bb4 5.e3 Bb7 (also 4.Nc3 Bb7 5.e3 Bb4). White usually plays 6.Bd3 for the Fischer Variation of the Nimzo-Indian (same as 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 b6 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3). Other moves are no good.
- 4.Nc3 Bb4 5.Bg5 Bb7 6.e3 h6, White can play 7.Bh4.
- 4.Nc3 Bb4 5.Bg5 h6 6.Bh4 Bb7 (also 4.Nc3 Bb7 5.Bg5 h6 6.Bh4 Bb4), White can play 7.e3.

The position after **5. Bg5 h6 6. Bh4 g5 7. Bg3 Ne4 8. Qc2** was heavily played and analysed in the 1980s.

#### 4.e3

Preparing to develop the king's bishop and castle kingside, was also a favorite of Tigran Petrosian. This apparently quiet development may lead to complex middlegame play. Black usually replies 4...Bb7, then play may continue 5.Bd3 d5 6.O-O or 5.Nc3 Bb4, transposing into the Nimzo-Indian Defence.

#### 4.Bf4

The Miles Variation, which simply develops the bishop to a good square; despite some success by its originator, this idea has never been popular.

### 8.8.3 ECO codes

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* classifies the Queen's Indian under codes E12 to E19 according to the following scheme:

- E12 – 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6
- E13 – 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.Nc3 Bb7 5.Bg5
- E14 – 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.e3
- E15 – 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3
- E16 – 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Bb7
- E17 – 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Bb7 5.Bg2 Be7

- E18 – 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Bb7 5.Bg2 Be7 6.O-O 0-0 7.Nc3
- E19 – 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Bb7 5.Bg2 Be7 6.O-O 0-0 7.Nc3 Ne4 8.Qc2

### 8.8.4 References

- [1] Gurevich, Mikhail (1992). *Queen's Indian Defence: Kasparov System*. Batsford Chess Library. ISBN 0-8050-2315-1.
- [2] Pein, Malcolm (14 December 2007). *Three Indian tales, The Daily Telegraph*.
- [3] John Emms (2004). *Starting Out: The Queen's Indian*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-363-2.
- [4] "Kamran G Shirazi vs Joel Benjamin". Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2009-04-13.
- [5] Nimzo & Benoni Update November 2007 Chesspublishing.com, John Emms
- [6] Nimzo & Benoni Update September 2008 Chesspublishing.com, John Emms

### 8.8.5 Further reading

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## 8.9 Neo-Indian Attack

### Neo-Indian Attack

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Bg5

The **Neo-Indian Attack** is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Bg5

This opening is also known as the *Seirawan Attack*, after top 1980s player Yasser Seirawan.

### 8.9.1 Description

The pinning of the f6-knight looks similar to the **Torre Attack**, but while the Torre is fairly common, the Neo-Indian is rarely played. The move order has been used by players such as **David Janowski** against **Edward Lasker** in **New York 1922**.<sup>[1]</sup> The opening has been considered possible opening surprise in the *Secrets of Opening Surprises* series.<sup>[2]</sup>

The most common responses from Black are:

- 3...h6 which forces the bishop to move again, and unlike the **Trompowsky Attack**, 4.Bxf6 will not leave Black with doubled pawns.
- 3...Bb4+ which can transpose to the Leningrad variation of the **Nimzo-Indian Defense** after 4.Nc3 or lead to unique variations after 4.Nd2.
- 3...c5 4.d5
- 3...Be7

Unless the game transposes to another variation, the Neo-Indian is classified as E00 by the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

### 8.9.2 References

- [1] “David Janowski vs Edward Lasker”. chessgames.com. Retrieved 1 March 2010.
- [2] Palliser, Richard. “Nimzo & Benoni July 06 update”. chesspublishing.com. Retrieved 1 March 2010.

## 8.10 Torre Attack

The **Torre Attack** is a chess opening characterized by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. Nf3 e6
3. Bg5 (ECO code A46)

or the **Torre system** in **King’s Indian Defence** (ECO code A48)

- 2... g6
3. Bg5

or the **Tartakower variation** in **Queen’s Pawn Game** (ECO code D03)

- 2... d5
3. Bg5

### 8.10.1 Description

White pursues quick and harmonious development, will bolster his d4-pawn by c2–c3, then often enforces e2–e4 to obtain attacking chances on the kingside as the Torre Bishop pins the f6-knight. If White plays an early c4, the opening will transpose to a number of more common **queen pawn openings**, such as the **Queen’s Gambit** or one of the various **Indian defences**.

The opening is named after the Mexican grandmaster **Carlos Torre Repetto**, who beat former World Champion **Emanuel Lasker** with it.<sup>[1]</sup> The variation was also employed by **Savielly Tartakower**, **Boris Spassky**, and **Tigran Petrosian** early in his career. Other noted top-level exponents include **Alexey Dreev**, **Pentala Harikrishna**, **Krishnan Sasikiran** and **Jan Timman**.<sup>[2]</sup>

The Torre Attack is rarely met in modern top-flight play as a “Go to or Primary” system, and statistics suggest that it is not particularly advantageous for White.<sup>[3][4][5]</sup> Due to its calm nature and relative lack of theory, however, it is popular at club level, giving White chances to seize a middlegame initiative. In recent years it has also been used against Black’s kingside fianchetto pawn structure.

### 8.10.2 Torre Attack (ECO A48)

A variation of **East Indian Defence**, after 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bg5, is often also called Torre Attack.

After ...Bg7, White usually plays 4.Nbd2 but can also play 4.c3.

After 4.Nbd2, common lines include 4...0-0 5.c3 and 4...d5 5.e3 0-0.

#### Example game

Van Wely–Leko, 1996

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bg5 Bg7 4.Nbd2 0-0 5.c3 d6 6.e4 c5 7.dxc5 dxc5 8.Bc4 Nc6 9.0-0 Qc7 10.Qe2 h6 11.Bh4 Nh5 12.Rfe1 Ne5 13.Nxe5 Bxe5 14.g3 Bh8 15.f4 Ng7 16.Qf3 Be6 17.Rad1 Rad8 18.Bxe6 Nxe6 19.f5 g5 20.fxe6 gxf4 21.Qg4 Bg7 22.Qxh4 c4 23.Kg2 fxe6 24.Qg4 Rf6 25.Nf3 Rdf8 26.Nd4 h5 27.Qxh5 Rf2 28.Kh3 Qe5 29.Qxe5 Bxe5 30.Nxe6 R8f6 31.Rd8 Kf7 32.Ng5 Kg7 33.Rd7 Rh6 34.Kg4 Bf6 35.Ne6 Kf7 36.Nf4 Rh8 37.h4 Rg8 38.Kh3 Be5 39.Rd5 Bxf4 40.Rf5 Ke6 41.Rxf4 Rxb2 42.h5 b5 43.Rg4 Rxf4 44.Kxg4 Rxa2 45.h6 Rh2 46.Kg5 Ke5 47.g4 a5 48.Rb1 Kxe4 49.Rxb5 a4 50.Ra5 Kd3 51.Kg6 a3 52.h7 e5 53.Rxe5 Rxf7

54.Kxh7 Kxc3 55.Ra5 Kb2 56.g5 a2 57.g6 a1=Q  
58.Rxa1 Kxa1 59.g7 c3 60.g8=Q c2 ½–½<sup>[6]</sup>

### 8.10.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 8.10.4 References

- [1] “Carlos Torre Repetto vs Emanuel Lasker, Moscow (1925)”. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2016-03-09.
- [2] Palliser 2012, p. 7.
- [3] “Torre Attack: Tartakower variation (D03)”. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2016-03-09.
- [4] “Torre Attack: Queen’s Pawn Game (A46)”. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2016-03-09.
- [5] “Torre Attack: King’s Indian Defence (A48)”. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2016-03-09.
- [6] Loek Van Wely vs Peter Leko (1996) “Loek of the Draw”

### 8.10.5 Further reading

- Tangborn, Eric (1993). *The Complete Torre Attack*. International Chess Enterprises. ISBN 1-879479-14-1.
- Gufeld, Eduard; Stetsko, Oleg (1994). *Winning With the Torre Attack*. Henry Holt & Co. ISBN 0805032800.
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## 8.11 Nimzo-Indian Defence

The **Nimzo-Indian Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 Bb4

Other move orders, such as 1.c4 e6 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.d4 Bb4, are also feasible. In the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, the Nimzo-Indian is classified as E20–E59.

This hypermodern opening was developed by Grandmaster Aron Nimzowitsch who introduced it to master-level chess in the early 20th century. Unlike most Indian openings, the Nimzo-Indian does not involve an immediate fianchetto, although Black often follows up with ...b6 and ...Bb7. By pinning White’s knight Black prevents the threatened 4.e4 and seeks to inflict doubled pawns on White. White will attempt to create a pawn centre and develop his pieces to prepare for an assault on the Black position.

Black’s delay in committing to a pawn structure makes the Nimzo-Indian (sometimes colloquially referred to as the “Nimzo”) a very flexible defence to 1.d4. It can also transpose into lines of the Queen’s Gambit or Queen’s Indian Defence. The Nimzo-Indian is a highly respected defence to 1.d4, is played at all levels and has been played by every world champion since Capablanca. White often plays 3.g3 or 3.Nf3 to avoid the Nimzo-Indian, allowing him to meet 3.Nf3 Bb4+ (the Bogo-Indian Defence) with 4.Bd2 or 4.Nbd2, rather than 4.Nc3.

### 8.11.1 General considerations

Botvinnik vs. Reshevsky, Moscow 1948  
Position after 24.Qe2–a2

In the Nimzo-Indian, Black is generally prepared to concede the bishop pair by playing Bxc3. As dynamic compensation, he often doubles White’s c-pawns, which represent a static weakness, and gains play against the central light squares d5 and e4, even in those instances where White is able to recapture with a piece after ...Bxc3. Black will aim to close the position to reduce the scope of White’s bishops. To this end, Black must blockade the white pawn centre from advancing and neutralise White’s attacking chances on the kingside. An example of Black’s strategy carried out successfully is the game Mikhail Botvinnik versus Samuel Reshevsky from the 1948 World Chess Championship, which reached the position in the diagram after White’s 24th move.

Earlier in the game, Reshevsky was able to block White’s kingside attack by playing Nf6–e8 and f7–f5. Now, both White’s bishops are reduced to defence, and White’s queen is reduced to passivity at the a2-square to defend the pawns on a3 and c4. Without prospects for counterplay, White’s game is strategically hopeless, and Black ultimately exchanged queens and won the endgame.

### 8.11.2 Rubinstein System: 4.e3

Position after 4.e3

The **Rubinstein System** (named after **Akiba Rubinstein**) is White's most common method of combating the Nimzo-Indian. **Svetozar Gligorić** and **Lajos Portisch** made great contributions to the theory and practice of this line at top level during their careers. White continues his development before committing to a definite plan of action. In reply, Black has three main moves to choose from: **4...0-0**, **4...c5**, and **4...b6**.

In addition, Black sometimes plays **4...d5** or **4...Nc6**. **4...d5** can transpose to lines arising from **4...0-0**, but White has the extra option of **5.a3** (known as the **Botvinnik Variation**). This forces Black to retreat the bishop to e7 or capture on c3, which transposes to a line of the Sämisch Variation long considered good for White because he will undouble his pawns at some point by playing cxd5, eliminating the weak pawn on c4, then prepare the e4 pawn break, backed by the bishop pair, which will gain force in the more open type of position which will ensue. **4...Nc6** is the **Taimanov Variation**, named after Russian GM **Mark Taimanov**. Black prepares to play ...e5, which may be preceded by ...d5 and ...dxc4, or ...d6. The variation was tried several times by the young **Bobby Fischer**, and has long been favoured by GM **Nukhim Rashkovsky**.

#### 4...0-0 Main line: 4.e3 0-0 5.Bd3 d5 6.Nf3 c5 7.0-0

Position after 4.e3 0-0 5.Bd3 d5 6.Nf3 c5 7.0-0

Black's most flexible and frequently played response is **4...0-0**. The main line continues **5.Bd3 d5 6.Nf3 c5 7.0-0**, reaching the position in the diagram.

White has completed his kingside development, while Black has claimed his share of the centre. At this point, the most important continuations are:

7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 Nbd7 (Parma Variation)

7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 cxd4 9.exd4 b6 (Karpov Variation)

7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 Nc6 9.a3 Ba5 (Larsen Variation)

7...Nc6 8.a3 Bxc3 9.bxc3 dxc4 10.Bxc4 Qc7 (Main Variation)

7...Nc6 8.a3 Bxc3 9.bxc3 Qc7 (Khasin Variation)

7...Nbd7 (Averbakh Variation)

- The **Parma Variation** (7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 Nbd7) is named after Slovenian grandmaster **Bruno Parma**, and can sometimes transpose to the Karpov Variation if pawns are exchanged on d4. White usually continues with **9.Qe2**, clearing the d1-square for the rook, which will assist in the advance of the d-pawn. Black then

faces an important decision. He may play **9...b6**, with the intention of playing ...cxd4 at some point to isolate the d-pawn and blockade it, or exchange on c3 as well to play against the isolated c3–d4 pawn couple. Or, he can consider **9...a6** to grab space on the queenside with ...b5. In this case, Black will usually retain his dark-squared bishop.

Black also has two rare alternatives on his eighth move worth mentioning: **8...Qe7** intending ...Rd8 is the **Smyslov Variation**, invented by former World Champion **Vasily Smyslov**, and **8...Bd7** followed by ...Bc6 is the **Bronstein Variation**, the brainchild of two-time world championship finalist **David Bronstein**.

- The **Karpov Variation**, (7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 cxd4 9.exd4 b6) named after former World Champion **Anatoly Karpov**, is one of Black's most reliable defences to the Rubinstein System. For the moment, White has an isolated pawn in the d-file, even so, Black plans to play ...Bxc3 at some point and follow up with ...Bb7, ...Nbd7, ...R(a)c8 and ...Qc7 to restrain White's c- and d-pawns. After 7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 cxd4 9.exd4 b6 the game usually continues **10.Bg5 Bb7**, when **11.Ne5**, **11.Re1**, **11.Rc1** and **11.Qe2** are all good moves for White.
- The **Larsen Variation** (named after GM **Bent Larsen**) can be reached by either 7...dxc4 8.Bxc4 Nc6 9.a3 Ba5 or 7...Nc6 8.a3 dxc4 9.Bxc4 Ba5, but the latter move order gives White the extra option of **9.axb4**. The idea is to wait until White plays dxc5 before playing ...Bxc3. If White does not oblige, then Black will play ...Bb6 with pressure on the d-pawn. The point of inserting ...dxc4 before ...Ba5 is to prevent White from inflicting an isolated queen's pawn (IQP) on Black by playing cxd5.
- The **Main Variation** was enormously popular in the 1950s, but the name has become increasingly inappropriate ever since. This is not because the line is bad for Black – on the contrary, Black equalises in all variations – but because White has a huge selection of moves to choose from, and Black must be familiar with all of them. After 7...Nc6 8.a3 Bxc3 9.bxc3 dxc4 10.Bxc4 Qc7, White has tried **11.Be2**, **11.Bd3**, **11.Ba2**, **11.Bb2**, **11.Bb5** (trying to provoke ...a6 before retreating the bishop), **11.h3**, **11.a4**, **11.Re1**, **11.Qc2**, and **11.Qe2**. Regardless of the move chosen, however, the basic strategic ideas remain similar: Black will play a quick ...e5 to pressurize d4. If White has a bishop on d3, then Black also threatens ...e4 forking it and the knight on f3. White will try to advance his centre pawns to free his bishops: c4, d5, and f3 followed by e4 are all possible. If Black can prevent

White from achieving this, then he will enjoy the better game. There are several move orders to reach the Main Variation besides the one given above; 4.e3 0-0 5.Bd3 d5 6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 dxc4 8.Bxc4 c5 9.Nf3 Nc6 10.0-0 is one worth noting, because White may try 9.Ne2 instead.



*Abram Khasin, 1995*

- 7...Nc6 8.a3 Bxc3 9.bxc3 Qc7 is the **Khasin Variation**, named after International Master Abram Khasin. 10.cxd5 exd5 is the usual continuation. White will try to build up a strong centre with f3 and e4, or he may play for a kingside attack with f3 and g4. Black will try to restrain White's centre as well as he can, ideally blockading it, before mobilising his queenside pawn majority.
- The **Averbakh Variation** (7...Nbd7) was popularized by Grandmasters Viacheslav Ragozin and Yuri Averbakh. The idea is to exchange pawns on c4 and d4 and then bring the d7-knight to b6 and d5. The same knight may also move to f8 to defend the black king. This line has gone out of fashion since the 1960s due to GM Svetozar Gligorić's gambit idea 8.cxd5 exd5 9.a3 Ba5 10.b4! cxb4 11.Nb5! with pressure along the queenside files and a potential square for the knight on d6.

#### 4...0-0: lines with Ne2

In general, the main line of the Rubinstein has held up very well for Black, so since the 1980s White has begun to look elsewhere for chances of obtaining an advantage. In the Rubinstein, White has often resorted to playing Ne2 rather than Nf3 at some point to be able to recapture on c3 with the knight, thus avoiding the doubled pawns. Two lines where White does this (following 4.e3 0-0) are:

5.Nge2 (Reshevsky Variation)

5.Bd3 d5 6.Ne2 (Modern Variation)

- The **Reshevsky Variation** was a specialty of GM Samuel Reshevsky. White will first play a3 to kick the bishop away, before moving his knight on e2 to a more active square. The main line runs 5.Ne2 d5 6.a3 Be7 7.cxd5, when both 7...exd5 and 7...Nxd5 are possible, the latter move leading to livelier play. GM Mikhail Gurevich is currently the foremost expert in the Reshevsky Variation.
- 5.Bd3 d5 6.Ne2 and the closely related variant 5.Bd3 d5 6.cxd5 exd5 7.Ne2 were collectively dubbed the **Modern Variation** by FM Carsten Hansen in his book on the Rubinstein Nimzo-Indian.<sup>[1]</sup> White again avoids the doubled pawns, but develops his bishop to d3 first so that it isn't blocked in by the knight on e2. Black usually continues 6...c5, putting more pressure on White's centre. While 7.a3 and 7.0-0 are playable, the main line is 7.cxd5 cxd4 8.exd4 Nxd5 9.0-0 Nc6, leading to an IQP position with White's knight on e2 rather than f3, as is normally the case. This gives Black the possibility of playing ...e5 at some point to completely liquidate the centre, although the resulting positions are rather drawish. White's main options on his tenth move are 10.a3, putting the question to the bishop, and 10.Bc2, intending 11.Qd3 with an attack on h7.

#### 4...c5

Position after 4.e3 c5

Black puts pressure on d4 and leaves open the option of playing ...d5, or ...d6 and ...e5. The game can still transpose to the main line mentioned above after moves such as 5.Bd3 d5 6.Nf3 0-0 7.0-0, but there are two major variations particular to 4...c5:

- **5.Bd3 Nc6 6.Nf3** (6.Ne2 will likely transpose to the Modern Variation) **6...Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 d6** is the **Hübner Variation**, popularized by GM Robert Hübner in

the late 1960s and '70s and utilised by **Bobby Fischer** in his world championship match with **Boris Spassky** in 1972 with great effect in **Game 5**. It is slightly unusual in that Black captures on c3 without waiting for White to play a3, but this is because Black intends to immediately set up a blockade on the dark squares with ...d6 and ...e5. This is feasible because White's knight is on f3; if it were on e2 (as in some lines of the Sämisch), White could quickly advance his king-side pawns, but in the current line the knight must be moved away first. By closing the position, Black is able to make his knights superior to White's bishops, and the doubled c-pawns deprive White of any pawn breaks on the queenside. It was the success of this variation that motivated the current tendency for White players to choose lines where the doubled pawns are avoided. When he does play into this line, White has two main setups to choose from: he may immediately close the centre by playing 8.e4 e5 9.d5 Ne7, or play more flexibly with 8.0-0 e5 9.Nd2 0-0, but Black has full equality in both lines.

- **5.Ne2 the Rubinstein Variation** (this is why 4.e3 is properly referred to as the Rubinstein “system” or “complex” to avoid confusion) is similar in spirit to the Reshevsky Variation: White prevents Black from doubling his pawns. After 5.Ne2, Black opens a path of retreat for his bishop with 5...cxd4 6.exd4, and now chooses between 6...d5 and 6...0-0. 6...d5 allows 7.c5, a typical continuation being 7...Ne4 8.Bd2 Nxd2 9.Qxd2 a5 10.a3 Bxc3 11.Nxc3 a4. White's c4–c5 push created a queenside pawn majority, which Black neutralized by playing a7–a5–a4. Black will now try to destroy the rest of White's pawn formation by playing ...b6 or ...e5, while White will try to use his lead in development to create attacking chances on the king-side. The alternative is 6...0-0 7.a3 Be7. Here Kasparov played 8.d5 exd5 9.cxd5 a few times early in his career, increasing his space advantage further but falling behind in development. A safer move for White is 8.Nf4.

#### 4...b6

Position after 4.e3 b6

Favoured by Nimzowitsch, 4...b6 is a move in accordance with the spirit of the Nimzo-Indian: Black fianchettoes his light-squared bishop to increase his control over e4. White usually continues 5.Ne2, avoiding the doubled pawns, or 5.Bd3, continuing his development (5.Nf3 usually transposes to 5.Bd3). The main variations emerging from this move are:

5.Ne2 Ba6 (Fischer Variation)  
 5.Ne2 c5 (Romanishin–Psakhis Variation)  
 5.Ne2 Ne4 (American Variation)  
 5.Ne2 Bb7  
 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3 0-0 7.0-0 d5 (Classical Fianchetto Variation or Tal Variation)  
 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3 0-0 7.0-0 c5 (Keres Variation)  
 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3 Ne4 (Dutch Variation)

- The **Fischer Variation** (5.Ne2 Ba6) aims to exchange light-squared bishops after ...d5 so that Black can play on the light squares. Keres, Bronstein and Smyslov were early contributors to the theory of this line, and **Fischer** used it several times successfully. White may play 6.a3, which was favoured by **Botvinnik** and asks the bishop on b4 to clarify its intentions, or 6.Ng3, which was invented by Reshevsky and prepares e4.
- 5.Ne2 c5 6.a3 Ba5!? was dubbed the **Romanishin–Psakhis Variation** by Carsten Hansen<sup>[1]</sup> because **Oleg Romanishin** and **Lev Psakhis** were the two grandmasters who were primarily responsible for reviving the line and infusing it with new ideas. It can also arise via the move order 4.e3 c5 5.Ne2 b6 6.a3 Ba5. Black dares White to try and trap the bishop on a5, a challenge White usually takes up, but rarely successfully.
- The **American Variation** is another name invented by Hansen<sup>[1]</sup> for the line 5.Ne2 Ne4, as it was pioneered by GM **Isaac Kashdan** and then developed by GM **Bisguier**, IM **Anthony Santasiere** and currently GM **Nick de Firmian**. Black will exchange off two minor pieces and play ...f5 to keep e4 under control.
- 5.Ne2 Bb7 is a rather passive line: White seems to obtain a slight advantage by continuing 6.a3 Be7 7.d5, blocking in the bishop on b7 and making e3–e4 possible.
- The **Classical Fianchetto Variation**, also known as the **Tal Variation**, can be reached through two move orders: 4.e3 b6 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3 0-0 7.0-0 d5 or 4.e3 0-0 5.Bd3 d5 6.Nf3 b6 7.0-0 Bb7. It is a solid variation where White often holds the initiative early on, but Black usually equalises in the end. White has two ways to attack Black's setup. The first is to play 8.cxd5 exd5 9.Ne5 followed by 10.f4 and transferring the queen or f1-rook to h3 via f3. This formation, known as the **Pillsbury Attack**, blocks in the dark-squared bishop and appears rather crude, but is actually quite dangerous. Black must create immediate pressure on White's centre by playing ...c5, and ...Ne4 may be a handy move at some point to block the b1–h7 diagonal and perhaps exchange some pieces. The

main alternative for White is 8.a3 Bb6 9.cxd5 exd5 10.b4, which gains space on the queenside and makes it harder for Black to free his position with ...c5.

- The **Keres Variation**, characterised by the moves 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3 0-0 7.0-0 c5, is named after Estonian GM **Paul Keres**, although Smyslov and Bronstein were also early practitioners of this line. If allowed, Black will play ...cxd4 and ...d5 in the hope of leaving White with an isolated queen's pawn. Nowadays, White's most testing continuation is reckoned to be 8.Na4, ducking the exchange on c3 and threatening 9.a3. The knight will often stay on a4 for quite some time to assist in a potential c4–c5 push. After 8...cxd4 9.exd4, Black often sets up a **Hedgehog** formation (pawns on a6, b6, d6 and e6), while White will try to pursue a strategy of gaining queenside space with b4 and c5.
- The **Dutch Variation** is so-called because after 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3 Ne4, Black usually follows up with 7...f5, with a position that resembles the **Dutch Defence** (1.d4 f5). It is not a very common line, probably because White obtains good chances by playing 7.0-0 f5 8.d5, sacrificing a pawn to open up lines for his bishops.

### 8.11.3 Classical Variation: 4.Qc2

Position after 4.Qc2

The **Classical** or **Capablanca Variation** was popular in the early days of the Nimzo-Indian, and though eventually superseded by 4.e3 it was revived in the 1990s; it is now just as popular as the Rubinstein. White aims to acquire the two bishops without compromising his pawn structure. The drawback is that the queen will move at least twice within the opening moves and that White's kingside development is delayed. Thus, even though White possesses the bishop pair, it is usually advisable for Black to open the game quickly to exploit his lead in development. Black has four common replies to 4.Qc2. These include **4...0-0**, **4...c5**, **4...d5**, and **4...Nc6** (4...d6 intending ...Nbd7 and ...e5 is a rarer fifth option).

- **4...0-0 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.Qxc3 b6 7.Bg5** is nowadays the main line of the Classical Variation (although 6...b5!? is a gambit invented by **Alvis Vitolinš**). Black's usual choice is 7...Bb7, but 7...Ba6 is also possible to target the c-pawn, and 7...h6 8.Bh4 c5 and 7...c5 are sometimes played as well. After 7...Bb7, White's most straightforward move is 8.f3 preparing e4, but Black can counter with 8...h6 9.Bh4 d5, when the pawn grab 10.cxd5 exd5 11.Bxf6 Qxf6 12.Qxc7 Ba6 is very dan-

gerous for White because of Black's better development. Therefore, White has sometimes tried 8.e3 instead, when after 8...h6 9.Bh4 d5?! 10.cxd5 exd5? 11.Bxf6 Qxf6 12.Qxc7 Ba6 White has 13.Bxa6 Nxa6 14.Qb7. Thus Black should prefer 8.e3 d6, planning ...Nbd7 and ...c5.

Both players can deviate from the main line. Instead of 7.Bg5, White can play 7.Nf3 Bb7 8.e3, intending to develop the dark-squared bishop to b2. Another possibility is 4.Qc2 0-0 5.e4, although this is somewhat inconsistent with 4.Qc2 as Black might be able to double White's c-pawns at some point (the queen must guard e4), something 4.Qc2 was supposed to prevent. After 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.Qxc3, Black can also try 6...Ne4 7.Qc2 f5, which is similar to the Dutch Variation (see 4.e3 b6), but without the doubled pawns for White.

- **4...c5** exploits the fact that on c2, the queen no longer defends the d-pawn. If White defends the pawn, then Black gets an easy game by keeping the pressure on d4, so White almost always plays 5.dxc5. Black can choose to recapture on c5 with the bishop (e.g. 5...Bxc5 or 5...0-0 6.a3 Bxc5), or with the knight (after 5...Na6 or 5...0-0 6.Nf3 Na6). In the former case, the bishop will eventually retreat to e7 and Black will set up a **Hedgehog** formation (pawns on a6, b6, d6 and e6). If Black recaptures with the knight, he will often have to give up the bishop pair at some point with ...Bxc3, but the knight is useful on c5 and can later go to e4, attacking the queen on c3. **4...c5 5.dxc5 0-0** (the **Pirc Variation**) was one of the reasons why 4.Qc2 was not popular during the mid-20th century, because the lines where Black eventually recaptures with the knight was reckoned to give Black easy equality, while the line which prevented this maneuver, 6.a3 Bxc5 7.Nf3 Nc6 8.Bg5 Nd4 9.Nxd4 Bxd4 10.e3 Qa5 11.exd4 Qxg5, left the Black queen active, while White still needs to secure the king. It was the discovery of 12.Qd2! which revived this line for White, because the endgame after 12...Qxd2+ 13.Kxd2 offers White a slight edge. Indeed, **Edmar Mednis's** remark was that the entire Pirc Variation had become unplayable at the highest level,<sup>[2]</sup> while **Modern Chess Openings** (MCO) cites this variation as the main problem with 4...c5. However, players like Kramnik have been willing to defend the Black side of this line against players like Kasparov.<sup>[3]</sup>
- **4...d5** is another move that strikes immediately in the centre, and was a favourite of **Mikhail Botvinnik**. After 5.cxd5, Black can either recapture with the queen or pawn. 5...Qxd5 is the **Romanishin System**: the idea is that after 6.Nf3 Qf5 7.Qxf5 exf5, Black strengthens his grip on e4 and makes e6 available for the bishop, which is enough for him to ob-

tain equality. White can avoid this with 6.e3 so that 6...Qf5 can be met with 7.Bd3, but the e3-pawn blocks in White's c1-bishop. The older alternative is 5...exd5 6.Bg5 h6, which tends to be a rather sharp line. After 4...d5, White can also play 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.Qxc3 Ne4 7.Qc2, when Black may play 7...c5 or 7...Nc6 intending ...e5. Even though White possesses the pair of bishops, Black still strives for a quick opening of the position to exploit his lead in development. The usual result of this is a dynamically balanced position.

- **4...Nc6** is the **Zürich** or **Milner-Barry Variation** (named after British chess player **Stuart Milner-Barry**). Black gives up the dark-squared bishop, but places his central pawns on d6 and e5 so that his remaining bishop is unimpeded. To avoid moving his queen, White will play Bd2 at some point so that when Black takes the knight, White can recapture with the bishop. 4...Nc6 is out of fashion because most players prefer to avoid blocking their c-pawn. A topical line would go 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 Nc6 5.Nf3 (better than 5.e3) d6, with the idea of playing e5. Black often prepares this with castling and ...Re8 or by playing Qe7. After Black plays ...e5, White usually responds with d5. Black is willing to lose a tempo moving the Knight back to b8 (or e7, which is often better) because the position is closed. White usually plays on the Queenside in this variation, while Black will try to play on the Kingside with ...f5 and possibly transferring the c6 Knight over to the Kingside after White's d5. Today, the line arises quite often by transposition from the **Black Knights Tango**, e.g. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 Nc6 3.Nf3 e6 4.Nc3 Bb4 5.Qc2.

#### 8.11.4 Kasparov Variation: 4.Nf3

Position after 4.Nf3

4.Nf3 is known as the **Kasparov Variation**, since **Garry Kasparov** used it to great effect against **Anatoly Karpov** in their 1985 World Championship match. Kasparov played 4.Nf3 six times, scoring three wins and three draws.<sup>[4]</sup> Today as White, this is a favourite weapon of GM **Alexei Barsov** and former Women's Champion **Nona Gaprindashvili**.

White develops the knight to a natural square and waits to see Black's reply. 4...d5 transposes to the Ragozin Defence of the Queen's Gambit Declined and 4...b6 5.Bg5 Bb7 transposes to the Nimzo/Queen's Indian hybrid line, so 4...c5 is the most common move that stays within Nimzo-Indian territory. Now 5.e3 transposes to the Rubinstein System, but the main move is 5.g3, which leads to a position that also arises from the Fianchetto Variation. 5.g3

cx d4 6.Nxd4 0-0 7.Bg2 d5 8.cxd5 Nxd5 can be considered the main line. Black has dissolved White's centre, but the bishop on g2 exerts pressure on the black queenside, which White may augment with 9.Qb3.

This line can also arise from the **Bogo-Indian Defence** (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+) if White blocks the check with 4.Nc3.<sup>[5]</sup>

#### 8.11.5 Other variations

- **4. f3** – This line has no generally accepted name, so is usually just referred to as the **4.f3 Variation**. It has previously been called the **Gheorghiu Variation** (a name given by Gligorić), named after **Florin Gheorghiu** who often played it early in his career, even defeating Fischer, and sometimes the **Shirov Variation**, after **Alexei Shirov** who used it with great success in the early 1990s, before he lost three consecutive games with the line and abandoned it. According to 365chess.com it is called the **Kmoch Variation**. It is a straightforward attempt to seize control of e4, though at the cost of delaying development, and therefore attempts to refute Black's plan, which has been to play for control of the e4-square. Black can play ...d5 or ...c5. After ...d5, the game may go 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 c5 7.cxd5 Nxd5, a position also reached from the Sämisch Variation. Black's pressure on c3 and d4 compels White to play 8.dxc5, trying to open the position for his two bishops. White will follow up with e4, and Black will counter with ...e5 at some point to prevent White from pushing his e- and f-pawns further up the board. Another approach for Black is to play 4...c5, after which White plays 5.d5 to keep his central pawns together reaches a Benoni-style position, and Black's main replies are 5...b5, 5...0-0, 5...Bxc3+ and 5...Nh5. 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 is a direct transposition to the Sämisch Variation below.

- **4. Bg5** – The **Leningrad Variation** received its name because its theory was developed extensively by players from that city, such as **Boris Spassky**. Black can play ...h6 or ...c5. After ...h6, the game may go 5. Bh4 c5 6. d5. Now Black has some choices. With move ...d6, follows 7. e3 Bxc3+ 8. bxc3 e5, when Black has achieved a Hübner Variation-like blockade, the difference being that White's dark-squared bishop is outside the pawn chain. The pin on the f6-knight is very annoying, and Black often finds himself compelled to break it by playing the drastic g7–g5, which also clamps down on a potential f2–f4 break by White. This move weakens Black's kingside, so he often will not castle, walking his king to c7 via d8. An alternative to 6...d6 or ...Bxc3+ is 6...b5, much played in the

1970s after Mikhail Tal scored a crushing win over Spassky at Tallinn 1973.

- **4.a3 – The Sämisch Variation** (named after Fritz Sämisch) is a direct attempt to refute Black's strategic concept, as White gives up a tempo and concedes doubled c-pawns to gain the bishop pair. After **4...Bxc3+ 5.bxc3**, Black has several possibilities, the most common of which is that he immediately begins to blockade the doubled pawns with **5...c5** and applies more pressure on the (often doomed) pawn at c4 with the moves **Ba6**, **Nc6–a5** and **Rc8**. In the early days of this line, **5...d5** was frequently played, though it was soon realised that this enabled White to liquidate the weakness at c4, so the idea fell from favour, particularly after the game **Botvinnik versus Capablanca, AVRO 1938**, and has never been revived at top level. As compensation, White establishes a powerful centre, in order to play for a kingside attack before Black can make use of his static advantages. White has two main options for playing: he can move slowly into the centre with **6.e3**, or he can play **6.f3**, followed by **7.e4** to take a quick hold in the centre. In practice, however, Black has demonstrated that White's structural weaknesses are more serious than the attacking chances he gets, so this variation is rarely seen nowadays. The Sämisch Variation was employed five times by Mikhail Botvinnik against Tal in the **1960 World Chess Championship**, with five draws resulting, and once in the **1961 rematch**, with a win for White.<sup>[6]</sup>
- **4. g3 – The Fianchetto Variation** resembles the **Catalan System**, where White fianchettoes his king's bishop to put pressure on the centre squares from the flank. Black can play **4...c5 5.Nf3** with a position also reached from the Kasparov Variation (see above), but **4...d5** is possible as well. This is considered the strongest response, since if allowed, Black can take the pawn on c4 and often keep it. This is not usually possible in the Catalan, where White's knight is developed to d2 and can simply recapture on c4.
- **4. Qb3 – The Spielmann Variation** is named after Rudolf Spielmann who played it at Carlsbad, 1929, and was played at GM level in the early 1930s, though soon eclipsed in popularity by **4.Qc2**. Like the Classical Variation, it avoids the doubling of White's pawns. However, unlike **4.Qc2**, the queen has no control over e4, which Black can exploit by playing **4...c5 5.dxc5 Nc6 6.Nf3 Ne4**, for example. Thus, despite the occasional revival by GMs Vladimir Akopian, Vladimir Malaniuk and Jeroen Piket, this variation is also unusual.
- **4. e4 – The Dilworth Gambit**, named for Vernon Dilworth, who contributed an article on the variation

to the March 1949 issue of *CHESS magazine*. Dilworth's idea was **4...Nxe4 5.Qg4 Nxc3 6.Bd2**. However, White's compensation for the pawn is nebulous at best, and the line accordingly never developed a following beyond Dilworth himself. (No. 3762) Chris Ward called the gambit "critical, but basically rubbish".<sup>[7]</sup>

- **4. Bd2**, unpinning the knight, is a move that is common among amateurs who have no theoretical knowledge when they face the Nimzo-Indian. Although the move is not bad, it is unambitious. The strategic aim of obtaining the bishop pair without conceding the doubled pawns fails, for after e.g., **4...Bxc3 5.Bxc3 Ne4**, White does not get to keep both bishops, and fair trades are usually not in White's interests since White has an advantage in space.<sup>[7]</sup>
- **4. Qd3 – The Mikenas Variation** is named after Vladas Mikénas. It supports the knight and brings the queen to a central location, but the queen is exposed on d3, making this variation rare.<sup>[7]</sup>

### 8.11.6 ECO codes

In the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, the Nimzo-Indian Defence has codes E20 to E59. All codes begin with **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4**, excluding E20, which also includes alternatives to **3...Bb4** apart from **3...d5** (which would be the **Queen's Gambit Declined**).

E20 – **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3** (includes Romanishin Variation, **4.f3** Variation of Nimzo-Indian excluding **4.f3 d5 5.a3 Bxc3+**, which is covered under E25)

E21 – **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3** (Kasparov Variation excluding **4...c5 5.g3**, which is covered under E20)

E22 – **4.Qb3** (E22 and E23 cover the Spielmann Variation)

E23 – **4.Qb3 c5**

E24 – **4.a3** (E24–E29 cover the Sämisch Variation)

E25 – **4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 c5**

E26 – **4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 c5 6.e3**

E27 – **4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 0-0**

E28 – **4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 0-0 6.e3**

E29 – **4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 0-0 6.e3 c5**

E30 – **4.Bg5** (E30 and E31 cover the Leningrad Variation)

E31 – 4.Bg5 h6 6.Bh4 c5 6.d5 d6  
 E32 – 4.Qc2 (includes 4...0-0; E32–E39 cover the Classical/Capablanca Variation)  
 E33 – 4.Qc2 Nc6 (Zürich/Milner-Barry Variation)  
 E34 – 4.Qc2 d5  
 E35 – 4.Qc2 d5 5.cxd5 exd5  
 E36 – 4.Qc2 d5 5.a3  
 E37 – 4.Qc2 d5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.Qxc3 Ne4  
 E38 – 4.Qc2 c5  
 E39 – 4.Qc2 c5 5.dxc5 0-0  
 E40 – 4.e3 (includes Taimanov Variation; E40–E59 cover the Rubinstein System)  
 E41 – 4.e3 c5 (includes Hübner Variation)  
 E42 – 4.e3 c5 5.Ne2 (Rubinstein Variation, Romanishin–Psakhis Variation via 5...b6 6.a3 Ba5)  
 E43 – 4.e3 b6 (includes Dutch Variation, Keres Variation)  
 E44 – 4.e3 b6 5.Ne2 (includes American Variation, 5...Bb7 Variation)  
 E45 – 4.e3 b6 5.Ne2 Ba6 (Fischer Variation)  
 E46 – 4.e3 0-0 (includes Reshevsky Variation)  
 E47 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Bd3  
 E48 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Bd3 d5 (includes Modern Variation)  
 E49 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Bd3 d5 6.a3  
 E50 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3  
 E51 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5  
 E52 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 b6 (Classical Fianchetto/Tal Variation)  
 E53 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 c5 (includes Averbakh Variation)  
 E54 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 c5 7.0-0 dxc4 8.Bxc4 (includes Karpov Variation, Bronstein Variation, Smyslov Variation)  
 E55 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 c5 7.0-0 dxc4 8.Bxc4 Nbd7 (Parma Variation)  
 E56 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 c5 7.0-0 Nc6 (includes Larsen Variation)  
 E57 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 c5 7.0-0 Nc6 8.a3 dxc4 9.Bxc4 cxd4  
 E58 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 c5 7.0-0 Nc6 8.a3 Bxc3 9.bxc3 (includes Khasin Variation)  
 E59 – 4.e3 0-0 5.Nf3 d5 6.Bd3 c5 7.0-0 Nc6 8.a3 Bxc3 9.bxc3 dxc4 10.Bxc4 (includes Main Variation)

### 8.11.7 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 8.11.8 References

- [1] Hansen, Carsten (2002). *The Nimzo-Indian: 4 e3*. Gambit Publications Ltd. ISBN 1-901983-58-7.
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- [4] [www.chessgames.com](http://www.chessgames.com)
- [5] Gambit Guide to the Bogo-Indian, Steffen Pedersen, Gambit Chess, 1999, ISBN 1-901983-04-8
- [6] List over Botvinnik–Tal games [chessgames.com](http://chessgames.com)
- [7] Offbeat Nimzo-Indian, Chris Ward. ch. 8 (Very Rare Fourth Moves for White)

### 8.11.9 Further reading

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## 8.12 Bogo-Indian Defence

The **Bogo-Indian Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nf3 Bb4+

The position arising after 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 is common. The traditional move for White here is 3.Nc3, threatening to set up a big pawn centre with 4.e4. However, 3.Nf3 is often played instead as a way of avoiding the **Nimzo-Indian Defence** (which would follow after 3.Nc3 Bb4). After 3.Nf3, Black usually plays 3...b6 (the **Queen's Indian Defence**) or 3...d5 (leading to the **Queen's Gambit Declined**), but can instead play 3...Bb4+, the **Bogo-Indian**, named after **Efim Bogoljubov**. This opening is not as popular as the **Queen's Indian**, but is seen occasionally at all levels.

The **Bogo-Indian** is classified as E11 by the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO).

### 8.12.1 Variations

White has three viable moves to meet the check. 4.Nc3 is a **transposition** to the **Kasparov Variation** of the **Nimzo-Indian**, therefore the main independent variations are 4.Bd2 and 4.Nbd2.

#### 4.Bd2

4.Bd2 is the most common line, the bishop on b4 is now threatened and Black needs to decide what to do about it.

- The simplest is to trade off the bishop by means of **4...Bxd2+**; this line is not particularly popular, but has been played frequently by the Swedish grandmaster **Ulf Andersson**, often as a drawing line.<sup>[1]</sup>
- **4...Qe7** This is called **Nimzovich variation**, defending the bishop, and deferring the decision of what to do until later is the most common. 5. g3 Nc6 and the **Nimzovich variation** main line continues 6. Nc3 Bxc3 7. Bxc3 Ne4 8. Rc1 0-0 9. Bg2 d6 10. d5 Nd8 11. dxe6 Nxe6 and the position is equal. Another alternative is 6. Bg2 Bxd2+ 7. Nbx d2 d6 8. 0-0 a5 9. e4 e5 10. d5 Nb8 11. Ne1 0-0 12. Nd3 Na6 and the position is equal.
- **David Bronstein** tried the sharper alternative **4...a5** grabbing space on the queenside at the cost of structural weaknesses.
- A more modern line is **4...c5**, after 5.Bxb4 cxb4, Black's pawns are doubled, and a pawn has been pulled away from the centre, but the b4 pawn can also be annoying for White since it takes the c3-square away from the knight. In fact, one of White's major alternatives is 6.a3, trading off this pawn at once.
- Simply retreating the bishop by means of **4...Be7** is also possible; Black benefits from losing a tempo since

White's dark-square bishop is misplaced at d2. The line is somewhat passive, but solid.

#### 4.Nbd2

4.Nbd2 is an alternative aiming to acquire the bishop for the knight or forcing Black's bishop to retreat. The downside is that the knight is developed to a square where it blocks the bishop, and d2 is a less active square than c3. The line is described in the *Gambit Guide* as "ambitious". Black's most common replies are 4...b6, 4...0-0, and 4...d5.

#### Monticelli Trap

This opening gives rise to the **Monticelli Trap**.

### 8.12.2 See also

- [List of chess openings](#)
- [List of chess openings named after people](#)

### 8.12.3 References

#### Notes

- [1] Pedersen mentions Andersson's utilization of this line, noting he draws a large majority of the time, however **Checkpoint Chess** [chesscafe.com](http://chesscafe.com), see Hansen's review of the **Bogo-Indian** CD, which notes that this is not always an attempt to merely draw.

#### Bibliography

- Steffen Pedersen (1999). *Gambit Guide to the Bogo Indian*. Gambit. ISBN 1-901983-04-8.

### 8.12.4 Further reading

- Taulbut, Shaun (1995). *The New Bogo-Indian*. Cadogan Books. ISBN 978-1-85744-026-3.

## 8.13 Old Indian Defense

The **Old Indian Defense** is a chess opening defined by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 d6

This opening is distinguished from the **King's Indian Defence** by Black developing his king's bishop on e7 rather than the **fianchetto** at g7. **Mikhail Chigorin** pioneered this defense late in his career.

The Old Indian is considered sound, though developing the bishop at e7 is less active than the **fianchetto**, and it has never attained the popularity of the **King's Indian**. Some **King's Indian** players will use the Old Indian to avoid certain anti-**King's Indian** systems, such as the **Sämisch** and **Averbakh** variations.

The opening is classified in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) with the codes A53–A55.

### 8.13.1 Main line: 3.Nc3 e5

The Main line is **3. Nc3 e5 4. Nf3 Nbd7 5. e4**; White can also play **4.dxe5 dxe5 5.Qxd8+**, but despite the displacement of Black's king, this has long been known to offer no advantage, e.g. **5...Kxd8 6.Nf3 Nfd7!**, with Black often following up with some combination of c6, Kd8–c7, a5, Na6 and f6. Black's position is solid and his piece coordination is good; White's pawn exchange in the center has allowed Black equal space and freed the f8-bishop. **5... Be7 6. Be2 0-0 7. 0-0 c6 8. Re1** (or **8.Be3**) and White stands slightly better.

### 8.13.2 Janowski Variation: 3.Nc3 Bf5

The **Janowski Variation**, **3. Nc3 Bf5**, was first introduced by **Dawid Janowski** in the 1920s. The idea behind the variation is that **3...Bf5** prevents White from immediately grabbing space with **4.e4**. The variation did not gain much popularity until the 1980s. Several top-level players have employed the line multiple times, including **Mikhail Tal**, **Bent Larsen**, **Florin Gheorghiu**, and **Kamran Shirazi**.

### 8.13.3 3.Nf3

This is also reached by **2.Nf3 d6 3.c4**. **De Firmian** suggests **3...Bg4**. **3...c6** and **3...Bf5** are also possible. **3...g6** will likely transpose to the **King's Indian Defence**, and **3...Nbd7 4.Nc3** to the Main line.

### 8.13.4 See also

- List of chess openings

### 8.13.5 Further reading

- Komarov, Dmitry; Djuric, Stefan; Pantaleoni, Claudio (2009). *Chess Opening Essentials, Vol. 3: Indian Defences*. New In Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-270-3.
- Pickett, L. (1984). *The Old Indian Renewed*. Nottingham: The Chess Player. ISBN 978-0906042533.

## 8.14 Kieninger Trap

The **Budapest Gambit** (or **Budapest Defence**) is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e5

Despite an early debut in 1896, the Budapest Gambit received attention from leading players only after a win as **Black** by **Grandmaster Milan Vidmar** over **Akiba Rubinstein** in 1918. It enjoyed a rise in popularity in the early 1920s, but nowadays is rarely played at the top level. It experiences a lower percentage of draws than other main lines, but also a lower overall performance for Black.

After **3.dxe5** Black can try the *Fajarowicz variation* **3...Ne4** which concentrates on the rapid development of the pieces, but the most common move is **3...Ng4** with three main possibilities for White. The *Adler variation* **4.Nf3** sees White seeking a **spatial advantage** in the **centre** with his pieces, notably the important d5-square. The *Alekhine variation* **4.e4** gives White an important spatial advantage and a strong **pawn centre**. The *Rubinstein variation* **4.Bf4** leads to an important choice for White, after **4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+**, between **6.Nbd2** and **6.Nc3**. The reply **6.Nbd2** brings a positional game in which White enjoys the **bishop pair** and tries to break through on the **queenside**, while **6.Nc3** keeps the **material advantage** of a pawn at the cost of a weakening of the white **pawn structure**. Black usually looks to have an aggressive game (many lines of which can shock opponents that do not know the theory) or cripple white's pawn structure.

The Budapest Gambit contains several specific strategic themes. After **3.dxe5 Ng4**, there is a battle over White's extra pawn on e5, which Black typically attacks with **...Nc6** and (after **...Bc5** or **...Bb4+**) **...Qe7**, while White often defends it with **Bf4**, **Nf3**, and sometimes **Qd5**. In the **4.Nf3** variation the game can evolve either with Black attacking White's **kingside** with manoeuvres of **rook lifts**, or with White attacking Black's kingside with the push **f2–f4**, in which case Black reacts in the centre against the **e3-pawn**. In numerous variations the move **c4–c5** allows White to gain space and to open prospects for his **light-square bishop**.

For Black, the check Bf8–b4+ often allows rapid development.

### 8.14.1 History

In a *Chess Notes* feature article, Edward Winter showed that the origins of this opening are not yet entirely elucidated.<sup>[1]</sup> The first known game with the Budapest Gambit is Adler–Maróczy (played in Budapest in 1896). This game already featured some key aspects of the gambit, such as active play for the black pieces, and White making the typical mistake of moving the queen too early. As the player of the white pieces was not a strong player, the new opening went unnoticed apart from the local experts who had witnessed the game. The Hungarians István Abonyi, Zsigmond Barász and Gyula Breyer further developed the opening. Abonyi played it in 1916 against the Dutch surgeon Johannes Esser in a small tournament in Budapest. The Austrian player Josef Emil Krejcek played it against Helmer in Vienna in 1917. Carl Schlechter published an optimistic analysis of the gambit in the *Deutsche Schachzeitung*.<sup>[2][3][4]</sup>



Tartakower, a practitioner of the Budapest Gambit

The first use of the opening against a world-class player was at Berlin in April 1918, a double round-robin tournament with four players: Akiba Rubinstein, Carl Schlechter,

Jacques Mieses and Milan Vidmar. Vidmar had to play Black in the first round against Rubinstein, then ranked the fourth best player in the world with a very positional style.<sup>[5]</sup> At a loss for what to play, he sought advice from his friend Abonyi, who showed him the Budapest Gambit and the main ideas the Hungarian players had found. Vidmar followed Abonyi's advice and beat Rubinstein convincingly in just 24 moves.<sup>[6]</sup> This victory so heartened Vidmar that he went on to win the tournament, while Rubinstein was so demoralised by this defeat that he lost another game against Mieses and drew a third one against Schlechter in the same opening.<sup>[2][7]</sup>

After this tournament, the gambit finally began to be taken seriously. Top players like Savielly Tartakower and Siegbert Tarrasch started to play it. Schlechter published in 1918 the monograph *Die budapester Verteidigung des Damengambits*,<sup>[8]</sup> which can be considered the first book on this opening. The gambit reached its peak of popularity (around five Budapest Gambits for every thousand games played) around 1920,<sup>[9]</sup> so much so that many White players adopted the move-order 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 to avoid it.<sup>[10][11]</sup>

The leading exponents of 1.d4 started to look for reliable antidotes. Alexander Alekhine showed how White could get a strong attack with 4.e4 in his games against Ilya Rabinovich (Baden-Baden 1925) and Adolf Seitz (Hastings 1925–26). But a few weeks later a theme tournament on the Budapest Gambit was held, in Budapest, and the result was 14½–21½ in Black's favor. Another tournament in Semmering the same year saw Alekhine losing to Karl Gilg in his pet line with White against the gambit, so that the e4-line had a mixed reputation.<sup>[10]</sup> Meanwhile, more positional plans were also developed for White. Rubinstein showed how White could get a small positional advantage with 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2, an assessment still valid today. The possibility 6.Nc3 was also considered attractive, as structural weaknesses were not valued as much as a material advantage of one pawn in those days. By the end of the 1920s, despite the invention of the highly original Fajarowicz variation 3...Ne4 in 1928, the Budapest Gambit was considered theoretically dubious.<sup>[12]</sup>

This assessment was left unchanged for decades, as few players at the highest level used the Budapest Gambit and information about games from lesser players could not easily be found. During that time, various responses were developed against the 4.Bf4 line; these included 4...g5, invented by István Abonyi, further developed by the masters Bakonyi and Drimer. The master Kaposztas showed that even when White succeeded in his positional plan, it only meant for Black a worse endgame with drawish tendencies.<sup>[notes 1]</sup> Two pawn sacrifices were also introduced in the variation with 6.Nbd2 (still in the 4.Bf4 line), based on pawn pushes d7–d6 or f7–f6 and a quick attack against b2.<sup>[13]</sup>

The Budapest Gambit saw a short-lived revival in 1984–85 when *Chess Informant* included three games (as many as in the previous fifteen years), all played at a high level of competition, and all won by Black.<sup>[14]</sup> But White players found reinforcements and even invented a line with 4.e3 and 5.Nh3.<sup>[15]</sup> In the 21st century, despite Shakhriyar Mamedyarov's successful efforts to rehabilitate the line 4.Bf4 g5, the Budapest Gambit almost never appears at the highest level.,<sup>[16][17]</sup> however Richard Rapport with black defeated Gelfand using the opening in round 2 of the 2014 Tata Steel Chess competition.

### 8.14.2 Performance

In the database of the website *ChessGames.com*, the Budapest Gambit scores 28.9% Black wins, 44.1% White wins and 27.1% draws. The percentage of draws is especially low compared to mainstream alternatives such as 2...e6 (43.7% draws) or 2...g6 (37% draws). This opening gives more chance to win for both opponents, although the percentage of Black wins is still lower than the alternative 2...c5. In the main line 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 the percentage of Black wins already falls to 21.1%, lower than the main lines after 2...e6 or 2...g6.<sup>[18]</sup>

The Budapest Gambit has never been widely used as Black by the top-ten chessplayers. Richard Réti used it five times in the period 1919–26 when he was among the ten best players in the world,<sup>[19]</sup> but he scored only 1½ points.<sup>[20]</sup> Savielly Tartakower used it four times in 1928 when he was the eighth-best player in the world,<sup>[21]</sup> including thrice in one tournament (Bad Kissingen 1928) but he scored only ½ point against world-class opposition: Bogoljubov then ranked number four in the world,<sup>[22]</sup> Capablanca ranked number two,<sup>[23]</sup> and Rubinstein ranked number seven.<sup>[5][24]</sup> Rudolf Spielmann used it thrice in 1922–23 when he was about number 9–12 in the world,<sup>[25]</sup> with a win against Euwe but defeats against Yates and Sämisch.<sup>[26]</sup> Nigel Short played the gambit twice in the years 1992–93 when he was number 7–11,<sup>[27]</sup> scoring only ½ points against Karpov (then ranked number two<sup>[28]</sup>) and Ivanchuk (then ranked number three<sup>[29]</sup>).<sup>[30]</sup> Recently, Mamedyarov used it twice in 2004 (scoring 1½ with a win against Van Wely) when he was not already among the top-players, and six times in 2008 when he was about number 6–14; he scored five points with wins against former world champion Kramnik (then ranked number three<sup>[31]</sup>), and grandmasters Tkachiev and Eljanov, but all six games took place in rapid or blitz events.<sup>[32]</sup>

Nicolas Giffard summarises the modern assessment of the Budapest Gambit:<sup>[33]</sup>

[It is] an old opening, seldom used by cham-

pions without having fallen in disgrace. While White has several methods to get a small advantage, this defence is strategically sound. Black gets a good pawn structure and possibilities of attack on the kingside. His problems generally come from the white pressure on the d-column and a lack of space to manoeuvre his pieces.

Boris Avrukh writes, “The Budapest Gambit is almost a respectable opening; I doubt there is a refutation. Even in the lines where White manages to keep an extra pawn, Black always has a lot of play for it.”<sup>[34]</sup>

### 8.14.3 Strategic and tactical themes

#### White builds up an imposing pawn centre

White has a strong pawn centre.

In the *Alekhine variation* White does not try to defend his e5-pawn and keep his material advantage, but instead he concentrates on building an imposing pawn centre. This brings him good prospects of a space advantage that may serve as a basis for a future attack on the *kingside*. However, the extended pawn centre has its drawbacks, as Lalic explains: “White must invest some valuable tempi in protecting his pawn structure, which allows Black to seize the best squares for his minor pieces with excellent prospects for counterplay against the white centre.”<sup>[35]</sup>

Hence in this variation Black lets White build his pawn centre only to undermine it later, a playing philosophy espoused in the teachings of the *hypermodern school*. The strategic themes are similar to the ones that can be found in other openings like the *Four Pawns Attack*, the *Alekhine Defence* or the *Grünfeld Defence*.<sup>[35]</sup>

#### Budapest rook

The “Budapest rook” is a manoeuvre, introduced by the IM Dolfi Drimer in 1968,<sup>[36]</sup> with which Black develops the a8 rook aggressively along the sixth rank using the moves a7–a5 and the *rook lift* Ra8–a6–h6.<sup>[37]</sup> For example, this can happen in the *Adler variation* after the move sequence 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.Be2 Nxe5 7.Nxe5 Nxe5 8.a3 a5 9.0-0 0-0 10.Nc3 Ra6 11.b3 Rh6.

The rook is then used to support a piece attack against White’s castled King.<sup>[38]</sup> Black can easily get several pieces around the white king, notably a rook to h6, a queen to h4 and a knight on g4. The queen’s arrival on the h4-square is facilitated by the absence of a white knight on the f3-square (that would otherwise cover the h4-square) and of a black



*The rook lift of the Budapest rook, along with an attacking queen manoeuvre.*

knight on the f6-square (that would block the way for the black queen).<sup>[38]</sup> If White tries to defend with h2–h3, this may allow the Bc8 to be sacrificed at h3 in order to open the h-file.<sup>[38]</sup>

The Bc5 may not seem particularly useful in this attack, but by eyeing e3 it makes it difficult for White to play f4 to chase away the black knight;<sup>[39]</sup> furthermore, the attack on e3 is sometimes intensified with **major pieces** doubling on the e-file. Besides, the Bc5 can sometimes be recycled to the b8–h2 **diagonal** via Bc5–a7–b8, to apply still more pressure on h2.<sup>[40]</sup> It can also stay on the a7–g1 diagonal to put pressure on f2, if White pushes e3–e4 at some stage.

The “Budapest rook” was an invigorating innovation of the 1980s, and gave the gambit new life. However, inconveniences arise from delaying d7–d6 in order to allow the lift: the light-square bishop has to wait a long time to develop, and any attack on the Bc5 is potentially annoying for Black (since it means either closing the sixth rank with ...d6/...b6, abandoning the active a7–g1 diagonal, or blocking the rook when deployed to a7). This, in addition to the risk of awkwardness in the king side (a knight on f5 will fork the Rh6 and the Qh4) and the single-mindedness of Black’s plan (with nothing to fall back on if the direct attack is repelled), has made some revisit the old lines, where it is instead the king’s rook that is developed to h6. The queen’s rook can then be retained on the **queenside**, and will be well-placed if the b-file opens as a result of Black’s Bc5 being **exchanged** and recaptured with a b6 pawn.

### Advantages of ...Bb4+

Alekhine variation: here 6...Bb4+ is considered a good move.

In most variations Black has the opportunity to play Bb4+, a move whose advisability depends on White’s possible answers. If White blocks the check with Nb1–c3 then Black should capture the knight only if White is forced to take back with the pawn, after which the **isolated, doubled pawns** are a positional advantage for Black that fully compensates the loss of the **bishop pair**, and even the gambitted pawn. Due to its immunity to pawn attacks, the c5-square may be used by Black as a stronghold for his pieces. Piece exchanges can be good for Black even if he is a pawn down, as he can hope to exploit the crippled pawn structure in the ending.<sup>[41]</sup> On the other hand, if White can recapture with a piece, the trade on c3 typically concedes the bishop pair for insufficient compensation.

If White is compelled to play Nb1–d2, it is sometimes a minuscule positional concession, as it makes it harder for this knight to reach its ideal square d5.<sup>[42]</sup> However, if Black is later compelled to exchange Bxd2, that is advantageous to White who thereby gains the bishop pair.<sup>[42]</sup> Besides, in some situations the Bb4 could be as misplaced as the Nd2.<sup>[42]</sup> Finally, if White has to play Bd2, then Black should exchange the bishops only if White is forced to recapture with the Nb1, as a recapture by the Qd1 would still allow the Nb1 to reach the d5-square through Nb1–c3–d5.

For example in the Alekhine variation, after 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4 Nxe5 5.f4 Ng6 6.Nf3, the move 6...Bb4+ (see diagram at right) is good because White has no good reply apart from 7.Nc3. Indeed, 7.Nbd2? just loses a pawn after 7...Nxf4 whereas 7.Bd2?! Qe7! causes White great problems: both the pawn f4 and e4 pawns are attacked, and 8.Bxb4 Qxb4+ results in a double attack against b2 and f4.<sup>[43]</sup> After 7.Nc3 Black can either answer with 7...Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 or with 7...Qf6, simultaneously attacking c3 and f4.<sup>[notes 2]</sup>

### Pressure against the e4-square and the e3-pawn

In the Adler variation 3...Ng4 4.Nf3, after White has moved f2–f4, the e3-pawn becomes a **backward pawn** on an **open file**. Black can then apply pressure on the e-file in general, against the e3-pawn and the e4-square in particular. Typical moves in this plan would include the manoeuvre Ne5–d7–f6, followed by putting the heavy pieces on the e-file with Rf8–e8 and Qd8–e7 (see diagram at right).<sup>[44]</sup> The Bc5 is already well placed to pressure the e3-pawn. Depending on circumstances, the Bc8 may be involved either on b7 or on f5, in both cases to assert control over the central e4-square.



Pressure against the e3-pawn

This plan is viable only if certain conditions are met. The d7-square must be available for the Ne5, so that it can later transfer to f6. White should also not be able to easily advance the e3-pawn to e4, where it would be adequately defended by the Nc3 and a possible Bf3.<sup>[44]</sup> Finally, White should not have the time to launch a quick attack on Black's castled position with the pawn thrust f4–f5–f6.

### Breakthrough with the c4–c5 push

Rubinstein variation after 10.Qxd2. White is ready to push the c4-pawn. For example, if 10...0-0?! then 11.c5!

In the main lines the pawn push c4–c5 often brings positional gains to White. In the **Rubinstein variation** 3...Ng4 4.Bf4 with 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3, after 7...Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 (see diagram at right) White gets the **bishop pair** and a space advantage. In order to build up on these potential advantages, the most common plan is to perform a **minority attack** on the queenside, with the goal of performing the pawn advance c4–c5 in favourable conditions.<sup>[45]</sup> This push can yield several advantages to White: it enhances the prospects of the **light-square bishop**, it creates a **half-open file** to attack with the rooks, and it creates an **isolated, backward pawn** on d6 after the exchange c5xd6.<sup>[45]</sup>

For example, in the diagram on the right, after the natural but mistaken 10...0-0?! White can immediately realise his strategic goal with 11.c5!<sup>[46]</sup> Then if Black accepts the temporary sacrifice after 11...Qxc5 12.Rc1 Qd6 13.Qxd6 cxd6 14.Rd1 White gets his pawn back and has created a weak

pawn in d7, while if Black declines the pawn he has difficulties in developing his queenside (for example 11...d6 might be followed by 12.cxd6 Qxd6 13.Qxd6 cxd6 and the pawn on d6 is weak).<sup>[46]</sup> Therefore Black generally tries to hinder the c4–c5 push with moves like d7–d6, b7–b6 or Rf8–d8 (if this creates a hidden *vis-à-vis* between the Rd8 and the Qd2).<sup>[45]</sup>

Similarly, in the **Rubinstein variation** 3...Ng4 4.Bf4 with 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nc3, after 6...Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 White is saddled with doubled pawns in c3 and c4 that limit the scope of his bishop pair. Hence the push c4–c5 can be used to free the light-squared bishop and disrupt Black's position.<sup>[47]</sup>

In the **Adler variation** 3...Ng4 4.Nf3, after 4...Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 Re8 8.Nc3 Ngxe5 9.b3 a5 10.Bb2 Nxf3+ Bxf3 Ne5 12.Be2 Ra6 13.Qd5 Qe7 14.Ne4 Ba7 White has good reasons to push 15.c5.<sup>[48]</sup> This move would close the diagonal of the Ba7. It would make it harder for Black to develop the Bc8 as pawn pushes like b7–b6 or d7–d6 may be answered respectively by cxb6 or cxd6, creating a weak pawn for Black. Also, the prospects of the Be2 would be enhanced.

### Kieninger Trap

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3 Ngxe5 8.axb4 Nd3 #

The Kieninger Trap. If White plays 8.axb4 then 8...Nd3 mate.

The Kieninger Trap is named after **Georg Kieninger** who used it in an offhand game against Godai at Vienna in 1925.<sup>[49]</sup> It occurs in the **Rubinstein variation** 3...Ng4 4.Bf4 with 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3. The Bb4 is attacked but Black does not have to move it for the moment, and instead both regains the gambit pawn and sets a trap with 7...Ngxe5 (see diagram at right). Superficially, White seems to win a piece with 8.axb4??, but that would be falling into the Kieninger Trap because it would allow 8...Nd3 **mate**; even after the exchange 8.Nxe5 Nxe5, the threat of ...Nd3 mate remains and indirectly defends the Bb4 from capture.

A rare variant has also occurred in a **miniature** in the **Fajarowicz variation**, after the moves 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ne4 4.Qc2 Bb4+ 5.Nd2 d5 6.exd6 Bf5 7.Qa4+ Nc6 8.a3 Nc5 9.dxc7 Qe7! when White, trying to save his queen, fell into 10.Qd1 Nd3 **mate**.<sup>[50]</sup>

### 8.14.4 Adler variation 3...Ng4 4.Nf3

The Adler variation 4.Nf3

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3

The Adler variation is named after the game Adler–Maróczy, played at the 1896 Budapest tournament.<sup>[51][52]</sup> White is ready to return the e5-pawn in order to develop his pieces on their best squares, i.e. the d5-square for the Nb1, the f3-square for the Ng1 and the a1–h8 diagonal for the Bc1.

Black can try the minor line 4...Nc6 that delays the development of its **dark-square bishop**, to develop it along the a1–h8 diagonal instead of the a3–f8 diagonal, depending on the circumstances. But the main line is **4...Bc5** to attack the f2-pawn, forcing **5.e3**, blocking in White's bishop on c1, so that after **5...Nc6** White will not have enough pieces to protect his e5-pawn in the long run. Placing the bishop on the c5-square also has subtler points, as Tseitlin explains:<sup>[53]</sup>

At first sight the bishop on c5 lacks prospects, being held at bay by the pawn on e3, and is insecure in view of the threat to exchange it by Nc3–a4/e4. In reality, posting the bishop here has a deep strategic significance. It holds up the advance of the e- and the f-pawns (assuming the white bishop will go to b2), and thereby secures e5 as a future knight outpost, which in turn restricts the activity of both White's bishops. As to the exchanging threat, the bishop may conveniently retreat on a7 or f8, or even in some cases remain on c5 with support from a pawn on b6.

After 5...Nc6, is 6.a3 a promising queenside attack, or just a loss of tempo?

An important theoretical decision for White is to choose whether to play a2–a3. While this move protects the b4 square and threatens the pawn advance b2–b4, it encourages Black's rook lift Ra8–a6–h6. As Lalic puts it:

It was not so long ago that 8.a3, with the obvious intention of expanding with b2–b4, was the standard move. However, after Black responds with the logical a7–a5, it became apparent in tournament practice that the inclusion of these moves is in fact in Black's favour, as it gives his queen's rook access into play via the a6-square.

#### Line 4...Bc5 with a2–a3

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.a3

After 6.a3

The opinion of the move 6.a3 has gradually shifted from being the main continuation to being a possible continuation, then down to its present status of being considered a mistake. The threat to push b2–b4 must be taken seriously by Black, who typically answers **6...a5**. But in the 1980s it was discovered that the push a7–a5 was actually a very useful one for Black, as it allows the Ra8 to be developed along the sixth rank. Meanwhile, the push a2–a3 is less useful for White, as he will not be able to easily push b2–b4. As Tseitlin puts it, “the point is that 6...a5 fits into the plan of attacking White's kingside, whereas 6.a3 does little in the way of defending it”.<sup>[54]</sup> Thus if White does not find a clear way to make good use of his move a2–a3, it may turn out to be a critical waste of **tempo**.<sup>[55][56]</sup>

After the topical moves **7.b3 0-0 8.Bb2 Re8 9.Nc3 Ngxe5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.Be2** Black has regained the invested pawn. White has a space advantage in the centre and can initiate pressure here or on the queenside by pawn pushes like b3–b4 and c4–c5 (possibly supported by a knight on the d5-square). Meanwhile, the white king lacks defenders so Black can start a pieces-driven attack with the **rook lift 11...Ra6** (see section “Budapest rook”). The stem game continued with **12.Nd5 Rh6 13.Bd4 d6 14.Ra2 Bf5 15.Bxc5 dxc5** and Black won in 26 moves.<sup>[57]</sup> To avoid such an unfavourable development, White players have changed the move-order to keep the Bc1 on its original square as long as possible, so that it can help the defence. Thus, the typical move-order became 7.b3 0-0 8.Nc3 Re8 9.Be2 Ngxe5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.0-0 when 11...Ra6 would be met with 12.Nd5 Rh6 13.e4 immediately attacking the maveric rook. So Black usually opts for 11...d6, forgetting about the Ra8–a6–h6 manoeuvre. After 12.Bb2 ECO considers the situation as favourable to White, but Tseitlin thinks Black still has a lot of possibilities (e.g. the other rook lift Re8–e6–h6), so that “the struggle still lies ahead”.<sup>[58]</sup>

#### Line 4...Bc5 without a2–a3

After 9...Nxe5, shall White attack in the centre or on the kingside?

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6

By refraining from the advance a2–a3 White tries to gain a tempo on the lines of the previous section, making it more difficult for Black to initiate the Re8–e6–h6 or Ra8–a6–h6 lifts. After the moves **6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 Re8 8.Nc3 Ngxe5 9.Nxe5 Nxe5** White has tried two different plans.

The older one sees White attack in the centre with moves like b2–b3, Bc1–b2, Qd1–d5, Nc3–e4 and c4–c5. White gets an important space advantage in the centre, but Black can attack the kingside with rook lifts. After 10.b3 a5 White can try to capture the Bc5 with 11.Na4 or 11.Ne4,

one point being that the retreat 11...Ba7 would lock the Ra8 because Black has not played Ra8–a6 already. Lalic still thinks 11...Ba7 is the right move after 11.Ne4 due to the importance of the a7–g1 diagonal, but Black can also reroute the bishop with 11...Bf8 and “White has no obvious path to even a minute advantage”.<sup>[59]</sup> After 11.Na4 Black can also simply react by 11...b6 when the loss of the bishop pair is compensated by the semi-open b-file and improved control of the central squares.<sup>[60]</sup> Tseitlin considers that after the exchange on c5 Black has the better position.<sup>[61]</sup> Hence the main continuation is 11.Bb2, keeping the knight jumps for later. Then the most common plan for Black is a rook lift: the plan Ra8–a6–h6 was tried in the much-commented game Åkesson–Tagnon (Berlin Open 1984). Black duly won, but after the game continuation 11...Ra6 12.Qd5! Qe7 13.Ne4 Ba7 14.c5 Rg6 15.Rac1 Bb8 16.f4 authors do not agree on which side had the advantage. Borik and Tseitlin both consider White to have a positional advantage, with Tseitlin recommending instead 15...Nc6!, with dangerous threats.<sup>[62][63]</sup> However Lalic writes of 15...Bb8, “it is true that the bishop pair looks a bit pathetic lined up on the back rank just now, but there is no way to stop them breaking out later”.<sup>[40]</sup>

The second plan for White, unveiled by Spassky in 1990, aims at a kingside blitzkrieg with moves like Kg1–h1, f2–f4, Be2–d3 and Qd1–h5. In the original game Black did not fathom White’s idea, so that after 10.Kh1 a5?! 11.f4 Nc6 12.Bd3 d6 13.Qh5! h6 14.Rf3 Black’s pieces were ill-placed to counter White’s attack.<sup>[64]</sup> A more principled plan for Black is to react in the centre, specifically targeting the backward e3-pawn and e4-square. After 10.Kh1 d6 11.f4 Nd7! 12.Bd3 Nf6 13.Qf3 Ng4 14.Nd1 f5! and Black has succeeded in inhibiting White’s e3–e4 expansion.<sup>[65]</sup> As Black was doing fine with the 11.f4 move-order, White has been searching for a new path with 10.Kh1 d6 11.Na4!? b6! 12.Bd2 a5 13.Nxc5 bxc5 14.f4 Nd7 15.Bf3 when Jeremy Silman prefers White.<sup>[66]</sup> White has even dared the immediate 10.f4 Nc6 11.Bd3 when it is extremely dangerous for Black to take the offered e3-pawn, as White gets a fierce kingside attack for free.<sup>[56]</sup>

### 8.14.5 Rubinstein variation 3...Ng4 4.Bf4

The Rubinstein variation 4.Bf4

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4

This move sequence is called the “Rubinstein variation” in reference to the famous game Rubinstein–Vidmar (Berlin 1918) when 4.Bf4 was first employed.<sup>[52][67]</sup> Various authors consider this move to be the most dangerous for Black.<sup>[56]</sup> It aims to answer 4...Bc5 with 5.e3 without blocking the Bc1, contrary to what happens in the Adler variation

4.Nf3. Another point is that in the Adler variation White faces the risk of a strong attack against his kingside (see section “Budapest rook”), while in the 4.Bf4 variation this is seldom the case because the Bf4 is well placed to protect White’s kingside. On the other hand, the early development of the bishop means that White is more vulnerable to the check Bf8–b4+, the b2-pawn is not defended, and in some rare cases the Bf4 can become subject to attack.

Apart from the sideline 4...g5, the main line continues with both players developing their pieces around the e5-pawn with 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ when White has an important choice between the moves 6.Nc3 and 6.Nbd2, each leading to extremely different play. With 6.Nc3 White acquiesces to the breakup of his queenside pawns in return for a material advantage of one pawn, the bishop pair and active play in the centre. With 6.Nbd2 White gives back the gambited pawn to keep a healthy pawn structure and acquire the bishop pair. After 6.Nbd2 Qe7 White generally plays 7.a3 to force the immediate exchange of bishop for knight, gaining the bishop pair, a spatial advantage and chances for a minority attack on the queenside. White can also try 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.e3 to win a tempo over the 7.a3 variation, though he may end up with the exchange at d2 made in less favourable circumstances, or not at all. The maverick gambit 6...f6 also exists.<sup>[68]</sup>

#### Sideline 4...g5

After 4...g5

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 g5

The sideline 4...g5!? was not well regarded at the end of the 20th century.<sup>[notes 3]</sup> It weakens several squares—particularly f5 and h5—as they cannot be covered by the g-pawn any more. White can try to exploit these weaknesses with the manoeuvres Bf4–d2–c3 (pressure along the diagonal a1–h8), Ng1–e2–g3–h5 (pressure against the squares f6 and g7) and h2–h4 (to open the h-file). Nonetheless, the 4...g5 line has found new supporters in recent years thanks to black wins against both 5.Bg3 and 5.Bd2.<sup>[69][70]</sup>

For years, the reaction 5.Bg3 was not well considered, because the retreat does not make the most out of Black’s provocative fourth move; as Tseitlin points out, “the bishop is in danger of staying out of play for a long time”.<sup>[71]</sup> But later Lalic found that 5.Bg3 was “just as effective” as 5.Bd2.<sup>[72]</sup> Black concentrates on capturing the e5-pawn while White tries to get an advantage from the weakening of the black kingside. After the typical moves 5...Bg7 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Nc3 Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 d6 Lalic considers the best try to be 10.c5!, sacrificing a pawn to weaken Black’s control on the e5-square and expose the black king further. White has also tried to quickly open the h-file with 7.h4

Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 but after 9...g4! Black succeeds in keeping the file closed.<sup>[73]</sup>

The alternative to 5.Bg3 is **5.Bd2** to place the bishop on the wide-open diagonal a1–h8, after which “White can expect a safe advantage”.<sup>[72]</sup> Then according to Lalic, delaying the recapture with 5...Bg7 6.Bc3 Nc6 7.e3 Ngxe5 is not correct as White can gain an advantage by 8.h4 or 8.Qh5,<sup>[74]</sup> so the immediate **5...Nxe5** is better. For some time 6.Bc3 was well considered because Black had problems dealing with various positional threats, but the correct way for Black was found in 5...Nxe5 6.Bc3 Qe7 7.e3 Rg8! 8.Nf3 Nbc6 9.Be2 d6 10.Nd4 Bd7 11.b4 g4 with good counterplay for Black on the kingside.<sup>[75]</sup> White’s efforts then switched to **6.Nf3** to open the e-file, something that Black cannot really avoid, as 6...Bg7 7.Nxe5 Bxe5 8.Bc3 would leave an advantage to White.<sup>[74]</sup> For example 8...Qe7 9.Bxe5 Qxe5 10.Nc3 d6 11.e3 and Black is at a loss for an equalising line,<sup>[76]</sup> White’s advantage consisting in his ability to install his knight on the strong d5-square and to attack the weakened Black’s kingside with the advance h2–h4. It is better for Black to continue with **6...Nxf3+ 7.exf3** when both 7...h5? and 7...Bg7 would fail to 8.Qe2+, so Black must try **7...d6 8.Qe2+ Be6** instead.<sup>[74]</sup>

### Line 6.Nc3

Black must choose between 8...Qa3 and 8...f6.

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nc3*

This is the only important line in the Budapest where Black is not ensured of regaining his sacrificed pawn. Black does best to immediately exchange the Nc3 with **6...Bxc3+ 7.bxc3** as otherwise White gets a small positional advantage simply by avoiding the doubled pawns (see the section “Advantages of ...Bb4+”).<sup>[77][78]</sup> Then Black can put pressure on the e5-pawn with **7...Qe7** when White’s only possibility to keep the pawn is **8.Qd5**. White threatens to ease the pressure with the move h2–h3 that would force the Ng4 to the unfavourable square h6, so Black’s only possibilities to sustain the initiative are 8...Qa3 and 8...f6.

The line 8...Qa3 puts pressure on the white queenside pawns, pressure that may later be intensified with Nf6–e4. The black queen also gains access to the a5-square, from where it puts pressure on the e1–a5 diagonal aimed towards the white king. After 9.Rc1 f6 10.exf6 Nxf6 11.Qd2 d6 12.Nd4 0-0 we reach the position of the famous game between Rubinstein and Vidmar, when Rubinstein erred with 13.e3? and later lost.<sup>[79]</sup> After the better 13.f3 the correct method for Black is to target the c4-pawn with the regrouping Ne5/Qc5.<sup>[80]</sup> Hence Lalic thinks 11.Qd2 is inappropriate and gives Black excellent counterplay, and prefers 11.Qd3 or even 11.Qd1!? After 11.Qd3 0-0 12.g3 d6

13.Bg2 Black should switch to a materialistic mode with 13...Qxa2.<sup>[81]</sup>

In the other line **8...f6** Black does not want to decentralise his queen and prefers to concentrate on active piece play in the centre. After **9.exf6 Nxf6**, 10.Qd1, 10.Qd2 and 10.Qd3 are all possible, but each has its drawbacks: on d1 the queen is not developed, on d3 it is exposed to Bc8–f5 and on d2 it is exposed to Nf6–e4. Lalic considers 10.Qd3 to be the main move, qualifies 10.Qd1 as a “respectable option”, but considers 10.Qd2 as “inaccurate”. Meanwhile, Black will try to create counterplay by attacking either the weak c4-pawn, or the kingside with g7–g5 and h7–h5. In both cases a key possibility is the move Nf6–e4 that centralises the knight, attacks the weak c3-pawn, controls the c5-square and supports the g7–g5 thrust.

### Line 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3

After 7.a3 White will win the bishop pair.

*On the way till 10...d6 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3*

The Bb4 is attacked but Black can play **7...Ngxe5** to get the gambitted pawn back, as 8.axb4?? would allow the Kieninger trap 8...Nd3 mate (see the section “Kieninger trap”). Now White is more or less forced to exchange a pair of knights with **8.Nxe5 Nxe5**.<sup>[notes 4]</sup> White still cannot win a piece with 9.axb4?? Nd3# or 9.Bxe5?! Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 Qxe5, so he usually plays **9.e3** in order to protect the c4-pawn and defuse the mating threat, so that now Black is obliged to move his Bb4. As 9...Bd6 would misplace the bishop and 9...Ba5?? would lose the bishop to 10.b4 Bb6 11.c5, Black usually plays **9...Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2**.<sup>[notes 5]</sup>

After 10.Qxd2, Tseitlin explains that “opening manuals assess this position as favourable to White on the basis of the bishop pair. However, considering the closed nature of the position, White faces substantial difficulties in the realisation of this nominal advantage.”<sup>[82]</sup> Black has not a lot of things to be proud of as there are no targets in White’s camp, but can put up a lot of resistance thanks to small assets. Black’s Ne5 is strongly centralised, attacks the c4-pawn, and restricts the Bf1 from moving to the natural squares d3 and f3. Moreover, exchanging the knight with Bxe5 is not appealing for White, since that would mean losing the advantage of the bishop pair. Also, the Bc8 can sometimes become better than its counterpart the Bf1, if it makes it to the good squares b7 or c6 while the Bf1 remains restricted by the Ne5.

This explains the most natural plans for both sides. White will try a minority attack on the queenside, in order to in-

crease its space advantage and to create some weaknesses in the black pawns (e.g. an **isolated pawn** or a **backward pawn**). So White will try to use the advances b2–b4 or c4–c5 in good conditions, supported by the queen and the rooks on the c-file and the d-file. On the other hand, Black will try to keep the position closed, most importantly by keeping the c4-pawn where it is in order to keep the Bf1 at bay. This can be achieved by moves like b7–b6 and d7–d6, and sometimes the manoeuvre Ne5–d7–f8–e6. The first move by Black has to be **10...d6!** because otherwise White plays 11.c5! and gets a clear advantage immediately. For example 10...b6? loses a pawn to 11.Qd5 Nc6 12.Bxc7, and 10...0-0?! is bad because of 11.c5! Qxc5? 12.Rc1 Qe7 13.Rxc7 and White is winning already.<sup>[46]</sup>

International Master Timothy Taylor has suggested an alternative for Black on move 9. He regards 9...Bxd2+ as inferior, arguing that “the strong black bishop is traded for the inoffensive knight, and white gets the long-term advantage of the two bishops in a semi-open game”.<sup>[83]</sup> Taylor instead advocates **9...Bc5**, when Black stands well after 10.b4 Bd4! (11.exd4?? Nd3#) 11.Rb1 d6 12.Be2 Bf5 13.Rb3 Ng6 14.Bg3 (14.exd4 Nxf4 15.Re3? Nxe2+ wins; 14.Bxd6 exd6 15.exd4 Nf4 16.g3 Bc2! wins material) Bf6; 10.Ne4 Ng6; 10.Nb3 Bd6; or 10.Be2 d6.<sup>[84]</sup>

**Battle for the push c4–c5** After 10...d6 White wants to push c4–c5 to free his light-square bishop.

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3 Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 d6*

After 10...d6! White can try (and has tried) about any move that supports the aforementioned plan. In particular, White has to choose if he wants to start active operations on the queenside immediately (e.g. Rc1, Qc3, c5), or if he wants to finish his development first (with Be2 and 0-0). The immediate 11.c5!? is a possible pawn sacrifice in order to open some diagonals for the bishops. As Lalic points out, “after 11...dxc5 Black’s knight on e5 has lost its support and therefore all tactical motifs based on Qd5 and Bb5+ must be carefully checked”.<sup>[85]</sup> White gets a powerful attack for his pawn but nothing decisive. The same idea can be tried with the preparatory 11.Rc1, and after 11...0-0 12.c5!? dxc5 13.Qd5 Ng6 14.Bg3 White should be reminded that he has not finished his development with 14...Qf6! and a counter-attack on the b2-pawn.<sup>[86][87]</sup> Playing Black, **Svidler** chose a different path with 11...b6 but his opponent **Lesiège** nevertheless sacrificed the pawn with 12.c5! bxc5 13.b4 0-0 14.bxc5 Bb7 15.f3 and Svidler chose to destroy his own pawn structure with 15...dxc5!? to activate his pieces and make use of the d-file.<sup>[88]</sup> The most popular move is 11.Be2, where White delays his queenside play until he has achieved castling.<sup>[89]</sup> It also gives Black more time to organise a de-

fence on the queenside with b7–b6, either now or after 11...0-0.

### Line 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.e3

After 7.e3, White concentrates on castling.

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.e3*

In this variation White tries to avoid the move a2–a3 in order to gain a tempo over the 7.a3 variation. After the standard moves 7...Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.Be2 followed by 10.0-0 it is Black’s last chance to exchange the Bb4 for the Nd2. The game will take an entirely different structure depending on whether Black gives up the bishop pair or tries to keep it.

Lalic thinks the strategies in which Black gives up the bishop pair (by exchanging its Bb4 for the Nd2) for nothing are a mistake. He does not like the strategy to retreat the Bb4 in d6 either, because they are too drawish. He recommends the strategy to retreat the bishop in c5, and maintain its position there with the help of the a7–a5 pawn advance.<sup>[90]</sup>

**Black gives up the bishop pair** When Black opts for 10...Bxd2, he runs the risk to end up a tempo down over the 7.a3 variation and to be soon unable to meet White’s positional threats on the queenside. White can avoid the push a2–a3 and continue with the standard plans of the 7.a3 variation.<sup>[91]</sup> However, everything is not that bad for Black. First, to implement his plan White has to concentrate on development (9.Be2, 10.0-0) before he turns his attention to the queenside. That means Black has more time to organise his play than in the 7.a3 variation, notably to attempt a blockade of the c5-square. Moreover, as White does not put immediate pressure on Black’s position, Black is not compelled to castle rapidly and he can keep his king in the centre for a longer time, or even castle queenside. Hence Lalic note that “White has not wasted time with a2–a3, but in fact it is not so easy to capitalise on this extra tempo.”<sup>[92]</sup>

A possibility for Black is to develop his light-square bishop rapidly, by prioritising the moves b7–b6 and Be8–b7 over castling and d7–d6. The game Solozhenkin–Stiazhkin (Leningrad 1990) continued with 9...b6 10.0-0 Bxd2 11.Qxd2 Bb7 12.c5 bxc5 13.Qa5 d6 14.Bxe5 dxe5 15.Rfc1 and Moskalenko assesses this position as better for White.<sup>[93]</sup> Lalic suggests that 13...Ng6 is an improvement.<sup>[94]</sup> In the game **Gausel–Reite** (Norwegian Team Championship 1991), after the same 9.Be2 b6 10.0-0 Bxd2 11.Qxd2 Bb7 Black introduced a highly original plan by avoiding the natural advance d7–d6, and instead blocked

a white c5-push by playing ...c5 himself. The game continued 12.Qc3 f6 13.b4 c5!? and Lalic was “deeply impressed by this plan, which really spoils all of White’s fun”. The c4-pawn is never allowed to advance, so that the Be2 is durably restricted. The Bf4 is obstructed by the Ne5, that cannot be easily removed. The weakness of the d7-pawn is not a worry as it can be protected by Bb7–c6 if necessary.<sup>[92]</sup>

#### Black keeps the bishop pair After 10.0-0 d6 11.Nb3

After 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 Black can avoid the immediate exchange of his Bb4 against the Nd2 in several ways. The first one, resurrected and elaborated by the grandmaster **Pavel Blatny**, is to exchange the Bb4 for the Bf4. This can be achieved via 10...Ng6 11.Bg3 (11.Bxc7?? d6 loses a piece) 11...Bd6 12.Bxd6 Qxd6. White still has possibilities to play for an advantage due to his more advanced development, his space advantage on the queenside and the possibility to install his knight on the good square d5. Taylor considers this Black’s best line, stating that Black has not given White the bishop pair, nor weakened his pawn structure, and should be able to gradually equalize.<sup>[95]</sup>

The other possibility for Black is to keep his Bb4 as long as possible, exchanging it against the white knight only in favourable circumstances. A couple of attempts have been done with this in mind, with subtle variations along the moves a7–a5, b7–b6 and d7–d6. Against the mundane 10...d6 White can continue with 11.Nb3 (see diagram at right) to play on the queenside against the exposed Bb4, or 11.Nb1 to recycle the knight on the ideal d5-square. Another idea is the immediate 10...a5, to have the d6-square for the bishop, inhibit the b2–b4 push and have the possible a5–a4 pawn advance if the white knight moves to b3. In the game Mikhalevski–Chabanon (Bad Endbach 1995)<sup>[96]</sup> Black kept the bishop with 11.Nb3 a4 12.a3 Bd6 13.Nd4 Bc5 14.Nb5 d6 15.Nc3 Ng6 16.Bg3 f5 and had dynamic play.<sup>[97]</sup>

#### Gambits 5.Nbd2 d6 and 6.Nbd2 f6

The gambit 4...Bb4+ 5.Nbd2 d6

With 4...Bb4+ 5.Nbd2 d6 (see diagram at right) Black wants to open the diagonal a1–h8 for his queen. After 6.exd6 Qf6 White can react to the attack on his Bf4 in several ways, the best one being 7.Nh3 to develop a piece and protect both the Bf4 and the f2-pawn. It also helps that the Bf4 is still guarding the Nd2, so that after 7...Qxb2? there is not the threat of winning the exchange (8...Bxd2+ would be answered by 9.Bxd2) and White can repel Black’s attack with 8.Rb1 Qa3 9.Rb3 Qa5 10.dxc7 Nc6 11.a3! Be7 12.e3.<sup>[98]</sup> Instead, Black must play energetically with

7...Nxf2 8.Kxf2 Bxh3 9.g3 Bxf1 10.dxc7!? Nc6 11.Rxf1 and here Lalic recommends 11...0-0 12.Kg2 Rfe8.<sup>[99]</sup>

The other gambit, 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 f6 7.exf6 Qxf6, is much riskier, as Black weakens his kingside and does not open a diagonal for his Bc8. Black tries to take advantage of the fact White has moved his dark-squared bishop away from the queenside, leaving the b2-pawn without protection. The correct plan for White was shown by **Gleizerov** who played 8.e3 Qxb2 9.Be2 d6 10.0-0 0-0 11.Nb3 Qf6 12.c5! to open the a2–g8 diagonal that was weakened precisely by the gambit move 6...f6. The move 11.Nb3 is not only useful to support the c4–c5 push, but also to exchange the knight against Black’s dark-squared bishop after a possible a2–a3 forcing the retreat Bb4–c5.<sup>[100]</sup> As Lalic puts it, “I doubt if Black has a satisfactory answer to White’s play in this game”.<sup>[101]</sup>

#### 8.14.6 Alekhine variation 3...Ng4 4.e4

The Alekhine variation 4.e4

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4

This variation is named after **Alekhine** thanks to his wins in the games Alekhine–Rabinovic (Baden Baden, 1925) and Alekhine–Seitz (Hastings, 1926).<sup>[52][102][notes 6]</sup> White does not try to keep its material advantage (the e5-pawn) and concentrates on establishing a strong pawn center and space advantage. A controversial point is whether the typical black manoeuvre Bf8–b4–xc3 is advantageous for Black (as it saddles White with doubled pawns) or for White (as it reinforces his centre). Lalic thinks both, considering 6...Bb4+ to be a bad move after 4...Nxe5 5.f4 Nec6 6.Nf3,<sup>[103]</sup> but a good one after 4...Nxe5 5.f4 Nec6 6.Be3.<sup>[104]</sup> After 4.e4 the main line is **4...Nxe5 5.f4** when Black has an important choice to make about where to move the Ne5. The retreat to the queenside with 5...Nec6 is considered best,<sup>[105]</sup> while the retreat to the kingside with 5...Ng6 is probably playable.<sup>[106]</sup>

Taylor considers 4...Nxe5 inferior, recommending instead a rarely played idea of Richard Réti, **4...h5!** (Taylor’s exclamation point). Then 5.Nf3 would allow 5...Bc5, while Taylor suggests meeting 5.Be2 with 5...Nc6! and 5.f4 with 5...Bc5 with quick development compensating for the lost pawn. He considers the main line to be 4...h5 5.h3 Nxe5 6.Be3 Bb4+, with good play for Black.<sup>[107]</sup>

#### Line 5...Nec6

After 5.f4 Nec6 6.Be3

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4 Nxe5 5.f4 Nec6

The Knight on c6 is safer than on g6, and is well-placed as part of a general strategy to control the central dark squares. It can go to d4 while the other Knight can go to c5 via a6 or d7. After 6.Nf3 Bc5 White has difficulties castling short, because the plan to exchange the dark-squared bishops with Bd3/Qe2/Be3 can be met by Bg4/Nd4 to muddy the waters.<sup>[108]</sup> As Lalic points out:<sup>[109]</sup>

White can no longer castle kingside and will usually have to go the other way. However, this is rather slow and gives Black time to try to undermine the white centre. To this end Bc8–g4 often comes in handy, in order to pin the white knight on f3 against the white queen. Note that Black should wait until his opponent has wasted a tempo with Qe2.

The main continuation **6.Be3** controls the a7–g1 diagonal and is considered to be the best reply.<sup>[110]</sup> If Black wants to contest the c5-square for his Bf8 he can try 6...Na6,<sup>[111]</sup> but most games continue with **6...Bb4+**. Here the best reply for White is controversial.<sup>[notes 7]</sup>

After 7.Nc3 Black has the *zwischenzug* 7...Qh4+ 8.g3 Bxc3+ 9.bxc3 Qe7 so that the diagonal a8–h1 is weakened before Black develops the Bc8 to the b7-square. The queen on the e7-square is well placed to pressure the e4-pawn. However, as most of Black's pieces are on the queenside, continuing with pawn pushes like f7–f5 is probably too weakening, as Alekhine demonstrated in his game against Seitz in 1925.<sup>[112]</sup> So Black does best to attack with pieces, possibly with the setup b6/Nc5/Bb7/0-0-0.<sup>[113]</sup> In that case Tseitlin considers that with a knight on c5 the move d7–d6 should be avoided if Black has to respond to the capture Bxc5 by dxc5, because the white pawns in e4 and f4 would have too much leeway.<sup>[114]</sup>

After 7.Nd2 Qe7 8.a3 Lalic considers 8...Qxe4 should be avoided, e.g. the continuation 9.Kf2 Bxd2 10.Qxd2 0-0 11.Nf3 d6 12.Re1 gives White several tempi against the black queen.<sup>[115]</sup> After the better 8...Bc5 9.Bxc5 Qxc5 10.Qf3 Lalic recommends 10...a5.<sup>[116]</sup> The introduction of the intermediate 7...Qh4+ 8.g3 Qe7 does not change Lalic's opinion, as after 9.Bg2 Na6 10.a3 Bc5 11.Bxc5 Nxc5 12.b4 Ne6 the bishop was well placed on g2 and Black experienced difficulties developing the Bc8.<sup>[117]</sup> But Lalic does not mention the game *Pomar–Heidenfeld* cited by Borik, in which Black played the advance a7–a5 to restrict the white advance b2–b4, and achieved equality after 9.Bg2 a5 10.Ne2 Na6.<sup>[118]</sup> Instead, he recommends 7...d6 8.Nf3 0-0 9.Bd3 and now the same development as in Pomar's game:<sup>[119]</sup>

9...a5 and 10...Na6 deserves attention, when White's movements on the queenside are more

restricted and the black knight will be able to settle on the c5-square without being kicked by the thematic b2–b4. It may appear that we have reached the same position elaborated in previous games a tempo down for Black, since he has committed his bishop to b4 and will later drop back to the c5-square instead of heading there at once. However, the white knight is less actively placed on d2 and in fact this fully compensates Black for the slight loss of time.

### Line 5...Ng6

After 5.f4 Ng6

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4 Nxe5 5.f4 Ng6

The Knight on g6 puts the f4-pawn under pressure, but may be embarrassed later by the pawn thrust f4–f5. Now 6.a3, an attempt to deny squares from the Bf8 by continuing with b2–b4 or Bc1–e3, does not achieve its goal after 6...Bc5! 7.b4?! Bxg1! 8.Rxg1 0-0! 9.Qf3 d6 10.g4 a5 11.b5 Nd7 12.Ra2 Nc5 when Black's superior pawn structure and well-positioned Nc5 gives him the advantage.<sup>[120]</sup> That leaves White with the choice between 6.Nf3 and 6.Be3.

The move 6.Nf3 controls the e5-square in order to prepare the push f4–f5. Unlike after 5...Nec6, White does not have to fear 6...Bc5?!, which encounters difficulties after 7.f5! Nh4 8.Ng5!, when the black knight is already in danger of being lost to Qd1–g4 or Qd1–h5.<sup>[121]</sup> Instead Black must react quickly with 6...Bb4+ 7.Nc3 when he can adopt a normal setup with d6/0-0/Nc6/b6 or act boldly with 7...Qf6 threatening both the Nc3 and the f4-pawn.<sup>[122]</sup> One point in favour of 7...Qf6 is that after 8.e5 Qb6 the black queen prevents White from castling short and is well placed if White castles long.<sup>[123]</sup>

The move 6.Be3 takes the a7–g1 diagonal from Black's Bf8 and may in some lines prepare the long castle. After the mandatory 6...Bb4+ White can opt for 7.Nd2 to avoid having doubled pawns, but he must be prepared to sacrifice a pawn after 7...Qe7 8.Kf2!? Bxd2 9.Qxd2 Qxe4 10.Bd3 with piece activity for the pawn deficit,<sup>[124]</sup> because the normal defence 8.Bd3? runs into 8...Qd6! and both the Bd3 and the f4-pawn are attacked.<sup>[125]</sup> White does not need, however, bother too much about the doubled pawns and after 7.Nc3 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 a peaceful black player might choose the quiet 8...b6!? followed by a normal development with d6/0-0/Bb7/Nd7/Re8/Nc5.<sup>[106]</sup> Instead of 8...b6 a more adventurous black player could choose 8...Qe7 9.Bd3 f5!? as indicated by Borik, Tseitlin and Lalic,<sup>[106][126][127]</sup> but in his more recent book Moskalenko thinks "this move complicates the game too much".<sup>[128]</sup> If the black player is neither peaceful nor aggressive, Lalic

proposes an alternative with 8...Qe7 9.Bd3 0-0 10.Qd2 and only now that Black has his king safe shall he unleash 10...f5!?, when “it is not so easy for White to meet [10...f5] as the two main responses, 11.e5 and 11.exf5, allow Black promising chances with 11...d6 and 11...Nxf4 respectively”.

### 8.14.7 Fajarowicz variation 3...Ne4

The Fajarowicz variation 3...Ne4  
The line 3...Ne4 4.Qc2 Bb4+

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ne4* The Fajarowicz variation is said to have its origins in the chess circles from **Leipzig**, with the first important game being **H.Steiner–Fajarowicz** at the 1928 **Wiesbaden** tournament.<sup>[129][130]</sup> In this variation, Black makes no immediate effort to regain the gambit pawn, preferring to concentrate on active piece play and tactical tricks.<sup>[notes 8]</sup>

The move **4.a3** allows White to avoid the annoying bishop check on b4, the also annoying knight jump to b4, and prepares Qc2 to undermine Black’s knight. Both **Lalic** and **de Firmian** consider it to be White’s best move,<sup>[131]</sup> with **de Firmian** assessing it as leading to a large advantage for White.<sup>[132]</sup> **Lalic** considers 4...b6!? to be the best answer, one point being that Qd1–c2, so effective in most of the other lines, can be met by Bc8–b7. After 5.Nd2 Bb7 6.Qc2 **Lalic** gives 6...Nxd2 7.Bxd2 a5! when the black bishops will be excellently placed on the b7- and c5-squares.<sup>[133]</sup> **Lalic** recommends 6.Nf3 instead,<sup>[134]</sup> while **de Firmian** continues by 5.Nf3 Bb7 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.Qc2 with a large advantage for White.<sup>[132][135]</sup>

The move **4.Nf3** develops a piece and covers the sensitive d2-square. After 4...Bb4+ 5.Nbd2 Nc6 6.a3 Black can easily get confused by the move-order. The natural 6...Nxd2 7.Bxd2 Bxd2+ 8.Qxd2 Qe7 9.Qc3 transposes in the same position as after 5.Bd2, but White can also try 6...Nxd2 7.axb4! Nxf3+ 8.gxf3 Nxe5 9.Rg1 Qe7 10.Ra3! with a strong initiative.<sup>[136]</sup> White can even retain his bishop with 6...Nxd2 7.Nxd2 and now **Borik** recommends 7...Bf8 with difficult play for Black as he is not certain to gain his pawn back.<sup>[137]</sup> To avoid these possibilities **Lalic** advises the move-order 6...Bxd2+ 7.Bxd2 Nxd2 8.Qxd2 Qe7, but does not mention the possibility of White answering 6...Bxd2+ with 7.Nxd2. A possible improvement for Black (after 4...Bb4+ 5.Nbd2) would be 5...d5 with compensation for the pawn in all lines.<sup>[138]</sup>

The line **4.Qc2** immediately attacks the Ne4, as a retreat by Black would effectively surrender his temporary lead in development, which is the compensation for the sacrificed pawn. Black must continue to develop while trying to keep

the Ne4 on its square, but that is by no means easy. **Borik** thinks 4.Qc2 is the move “that gives Black the most problems to solve”,<sup>[139]</sup> but **Lalic** does not agree at all, stating that the reply “4...Bb4+ [...] followed by d7–d5 ensures Black a rapid development and plenty of counterplay. It is for this reason that 4.Qc2 is not on the danger list”.<sup>[140]</sup> The reply 4...Bb4+ (see diagram at right) pins the white pieces before deciding what to do with the Ne4. White cannot reply 5.Bd2 as he would lose the bishop pair and Black would easily regain the e5-pawn with Nc6/Qe7/0-0/Re8. After 5.Nd2 this knight would be misplaced and would block the Bc1, so Black could open the game with 5...d5 in favourable circumstances. Best for White is 5.Nc3 d5 6.exd6 Bf5 7.Bd2 Nxd6 8.e4! Bxc3 9.Bxc3 Bxe4 when Black has regained his pawn but White has the bishop pair and possibilities of an attack on the kingside.<sup>[141]</sup>

### 8.14.8 Other possibilities

#### Line 3...Ng4 4.e3

After 4.e3 Nxe5 5.Nh3

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e3*

Apart from the main lines 4.Bf4, 4.Nf3 and 4.e4, the only significant other fourth move is **4.e3** to continue by 4...Nxe5 5.Nh3 (or the other move-order 4.Nh3 and 5.e3) so that the white knight starts the journey Ng1–h3–f4–d5 reach its ideal d5-square.<sup>[142]</sup> The idea with 4.e3 and 5.Nh3 was favorite of a leading Soviet coach and writer **Mikhail Shereshevsky**, who wrote in his 1994 book *The Soviet Chess Conveyor* that the line was first shown to him by a strong correspondence player **Donatas Lapienis**.<sup>[143]</sup> Black has tried to prevent White’s idea by the suitably strange-looking move 5...Ng6, taking the f4-square from the Nh3. Then White can develop along various setups, the most active being 6.Qh5 with the possibility Nh3–g5 in store to recycle the knight towards a more central position.<sup>[144]</sup> Black can also ignore White’s intentions and concentrate on his own play by placing the Nb8 on c5, in order to put pressure on the d3-square. After 5...g6 6.Nf4 Bg7 7.Be2 0-0 8.0-0 d6 9.Nc3 Nbd7 10.Qd2 a5 11.b3 Nc5 the position of Black’s knights is secured and Black’s position is similar to the Leningrad variation of the Dutch Defence (once he has played f7–f5).<sup>[145]</sup> White has no reason, however, to abandon the a1–h8 diagonal to Black, and he can try 5...g6 6.Bd2 d6 7.Nf4 Bg7 8.Bc3 0-0 9.Be2 Nbd7 10.Nd2 b6 and in one game White gained a minimal edge.<sup>[146]</sup>

### Other fourth moves after 3...Ng4

After 4.Qd4

A few other lines have been tried, with the outcome varying from an immediate equality to a clear advantage for Black. The cooling **4.e6** avoids complications and heads for an equal endgame with 4...dxe6 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8, Black's loss of the right to castle being of no great importance since queens have been traded. If Black wants to avoid this early endgame, he can try 4...Bb4+ 5.Nc3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 dxe6 and now the exchange of queens would give a plus to Black, as the white queenside pawns are isolated and doubled.<sup>[147]</sup> The greedy **4.f4** is weak because White neglects his development and weakens the a7–g1 diagonal.<sup>[148][149][150][151]</sup> Black can immediately exploit this with 4...Bc5, which threatens a fork on f2 and forbids White's castling; Black may later push d7–d6 to open the centre, e.g. 5.Nh3 0-0 6.Nc3 d6 7.exd6 cxd6 when Black has good squares for its pieces while White's castling is delayed.

Another reasonable-looking move is **4.Qd4** as it protects the e5-pawn and attacks the Ng4. However, *“the problem for White in the Budapest is that natural moves often lead to disaster”*.<sup>[152]</sup> Best for Black is the gambit 4...d6 5.exd6 Nc6! 6.Qd1 Bxd6, when the natural 7.Nf3?? is an error because of 7...Nxf2! 8.Kxf2 Bg3+ winning the queen.<sup>[153]</sup> White must develop quietly with moves like Nc3/Nf3/e3/Be2, allowing Black to find active positions for his pieces with 0-0/Be6/Qe7/Rfd8, and preparing several sacrificial ideas on e3 or f2, with excellent attacking possibilities.<sup>[154]</sup> Similar to 4.Qd4 is **4.Qd5** when after 4...Nc6 White can seize the last opportunity to return to calm waters with 5.Bf4 Bb4+ 6.Nc3 which will transpose in the Rubinstein line,<sup>[155]</sup> or he can try 5.Nf3 d6 6.exd6 Be6 7.d7+ Bxd7 when Black's lead in development compensates for the pawn.<sup>[156]</sup>

### Declining the gambit

Declining the gambit is almost never seen in master play because it promises White equality at best. After **3.d5?! Bc5** White has prematurely blocked the central position, giving the a7–g1 diagonal to Black for his bishop. In this variation Black can either play on the queenside with a plan like b5/Nb6/Bd7, or on the kingside with a plan like Ne8/g6/Ng7/f5.<sup>[157]</sup> The shy **3.e3?! exd4 4.exd4** transposes into a line of the Exchange Variation of the French Defence with 4...d5, but Black can also develop rapidly with 4...Bb4+ 5.Bd2 Bxd2+ 6.Nxd2 0-0.<sup>[158][159]</sup> After **3.e4?** Black gains a crushing attack via 3...Nxe4 4.dxe5 Bc5 5.Nh3 d6 6.Qe2 f5 7.exf6 0-0! 8.fxf7 Re8 9.Be3 Bxe3 10.fxe3 Bxh3 11.gxh3 Qh4+.<sup>[160][161]</sup> After **3.Bg5?! the game Ladmann–Tartakower (Scarborough 1929) continued**

with 3...exd4 4.Qxd4 Be7 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Qd1 Ne4 7.Bxe7 Qxe7 8.a3 d6 9.e3 0-0 10.Be2 Qf6 11.Nbd2 Bf5 when both Tseitlin and Borik assess the position as favourable for Black.<sup>[158][162]</sup> After **3.Nf3?! the game Menchik–Tartakower (Paris 1929)**<sup>[163]</sup> continued with 3...e4 4.Nfd2 d5 5.cxd5?! Qxd5 6.e3 Bb4 7.Nc3 Bxc3 8.bxc3 0-0 and White has problems developing his kingside because of the potential weakness of g2.<sup>[162]</sup>

### 8.14.9 Illustrative games

#### Wu Shaobin–Nadanian, Singapore 2006

The following game was played between the Chinese GM Wu Shaobin (White) and Armenian IM Ashot Nadanian (Black) at Singapore 2006.<sup>[notes 10]</sup>

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.Be2 Nxe5 7.Nxe5 Nxe5 8.0-0 0-0 9.b3 Re8 10.Bb2 a5** Preparing Dolfi Drimer's rook manoeuvre Ra8–a6–h6. Nadanian calls the pawn advance a7–a5 “the soul of the Budapest Gambit”.<sup>[164]</sup> **11.Nc3 Ra6 12.Ne4 Ba7 13.Ng3 Qh4 14.Nf5 Qg5!?** This was a new move, before 14...Qe4 had been played. **15.Nd4 Rg6 16.g3 d5?! 18...Qh6** was stronger. **17.cxd5?** White should have played 17.Nb5! **17...Bh3! 18.Re1 Ng4 19.Nf3 Qxe3!** Karolyi writes, “This shows Kasparov-like aggression and ingenuity.” **20.Bd4 Qxf2+!! 21.Bxf2 Bxf2+ 22.Kh1 Bb6 23.Qb1?** White should have defended with 23.Rf1! After 23...Ne3 24.Qd3 Bg2+ 25.Kg1 Bh3 White can either repeat moves with 26.Kh1, or try 26.Nd4. **23...Nf2+ 24.Kg1 Rf6!** Black has time to increase the pressure. **25.b4!** If 25.Qc2?, then 25...Ng4+ 26.Kh1 Bg2+! winning the queen. **25...a4!** But not 25...Bxf3? 26.bxa5. **26.Ng5** Black can now force mate in 8 moves. **26...Ng4+! 27.Kh1 Bg2+!!** “This is a marvellous move, and it must have been such a thrill to play it on the board.” (Karolyi). **28.Kxg2 Rf2+ 29.Kh3 Rxh2+ 30.Kxg4 h5+ 31.Kf4 Be3+ 0-1**<sup>[165]</sup>

### 8.14.10 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places
- Indian Defence

### 8.14.11 Notes

- [1] White's plan involves pawn advances on the queenside, resulting in the creation of a weak pawn for Black, then winning this weak pawn. In this process all minor pieces and queenside pawns are likely to disappear, so that White ends

up in a better ending with four pawns on the kingside against three for Black, and only major pieces. This type of ending has drawish tendencies, as Kaposztas demonstrated in his games against Meleghegyi (Budapest 1981), Petran (Budapest 1974) or Farago (Budapest 1975), all of them drawn.

- [2] Another example is in the game Döry–Tartakower (Vienna 1928), when after the initial opening sequence 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e3 Nxe5 5.Nf3 the answer 5...Bb4+?! is bad because White can play 6.Nbd2 to avoid the exchange of bishops and gain a tempo later with a2–a3, with a small plus (see Tseitlin 1992, p.13).  
A third example is in the Adler variation after 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 when Black should not play 4...Bb4+ because White can answer 5.Nbd2! Nc6 6.e3 Ngxe5 7.Nxe5 Nxe5 8.a3! Bxd2+ 9.Qxd2 and White has the better prospects. He has the bishop pair and he can develop his Bc1 on the influential a1–h8 diagonal (see Tseitlin 1992, p.69).
- [3] Borik wrote that “the move 4...g5 creates irreparable weaknesses in Black’s camp” (see Borik 1986, p.22), while Tseitlin decided “this extravagant tactical stroke weakens the kingside and, on general grounds alone, cannot be good” (see Tseitlin 1992, p.41). Lalic warned that “Black should be aware of the risks he is taking by playing such a line” (see Lalic 1998, p.65).
- [4] Black threatens both the c4-pawn and the Nf3, and 8.e3?! Nxf3+ forces either 9.gxf3 with doubled pawns or 9.Qxf3 Bxd2+ 10.Kxd2, when White cannot castle any more. White does not want to play 8.Bxe5?! either because it would cede the bishop pair, which is the main source of White’s hopes for an advantage in this line.
- [5] Note that for Black, the sequence 7...Ngxe5 8...Nxe5 9...Bxd2+ is not only cunning, but also the best move-order as another sequence would give White an early opportunity to realise the advantageous c4–c5 push (whose advantages are explained in the section “Breakthrough with the c4–c5 push”). For example after 7...Bxd2+?! 8.Qxd2 Ngxe5 9.Nxe5 Nxe5 White should not play the usual 10.e3?! but should strive for more with the immediate 10.c5! as Black cannot take in c5 without losing the c7-pawn because of the possibilities Ra1–c1 and Qd2–c3 (see Lalic 1998, p.33).
- [6] As cited by Tseitlin (p.21), Alekhine himself stated:

This is considered with good reason to be White’s best system against the Budapest Gambit. White hands the pawn back, but in return gains control of d5. Over the next few moves, however, he has to play with extreme precision, since otherwise his central pawn position may become the object of a successful attack by Black.

- [7] While Borik does not express a preference, Alekhine considers 7.Nc3! is “much stronger than 7.Nd2, for with the knight threatening to jump to d5, Black will sooner or later be forced to exchange his important dark-squared bishop for

it. The doubling of the c-pawns in these circumstances is not something White should fear.” Tseitlin agrees, stating that “after 7.Nd2 Black has no difficulty at all” (see Tseitlin 1992, pp.31 & 119). On the other hand, Lalic thinks 7.Nd2! is more accurate as “White avoids the doubled c-pawns that are likely to occur after 7.Nc3, and this knight can later be deployed via the b3-square” (see Lalic 1998, p.111).

- [8] These tactical pitfalls include notably a Bb4+ at an annoying moment, a Qf6 with a double attack on b2 and f2, (after 1...d6 2.exd6 Bxd6) the pseudo-sacrifice 3...Nxf2 4.Kxf2 Bg3+ and 5...Qxd1 winning White’s queen for two minor pieces, and a concerted attack on the d3 square with the setup Nc5/Bf5/Nb4 (once White has played e3).
- [9] Black mates with either 31.Kf5 g6+ 32.Kf6 Bd4 mate, or 31. Kf3 Rf2 mate.
- [10] An interactive move list and diagram for the game is at A Budapest Gambit Assault. (Scroll down after reaching that webpage. Also note the error there at move 31, since the actual game ended 31.Kf4 Be3+.)

## 8.14.12 Footnotes

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- [35] Lalic 1998, p.9
- [36] Moskalenko 2008, p.159
- [37] Lalic 1998, p.12
- [38] Lalic 1998, p.13
- [39] Moskalenko 2008, p.162
- [40] Lalic 1998, p.76
- [41] Lalic 1998, p.10
- [42] Moskalenko 2008, p.51–52
- [43] Tseitlin 1992, p.37
- [44] Lalic 1998, p.81
- [45] Moskalenko 2008, p.54
- [46] Lalic 1998, p.32  
"Gurevich–Miezis, Bad Godesburg 1996". ChessGames.com.
- [47] Lalic 1998, p.10  
"Glorigić–Westerinen, Venice 1971". ChessGames.com.
- [48] Borik 1986, p.17  
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- [49] Borik 1986, p.24
- [50] Borik 1986, p.82  
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### 8.15 Black Knights’ Tango

The **Black Knights’ Tango** (also known as the **Mexican Defense** or **Kevitz–Trajkovic Defense**) is a **chess opening** beginning with the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 Nc6

This position can also be reached by **transposition**, for example 1.c4 Nf6, 1.d4 Nc6, or 1.c4 Nc6.

#### 8.15.1 History

The opening originated in the 1920s, when it was played by both the **Mexican grandmaster** Carlos Torre (hence the name “Mexican Defense”)<sup>[1]</sup> and the **American master** Alexander Kevitz (the “Kevitz” in “Kevitz–Trajkovic Defense”). Torre used it to defeat then-U.S. Chess Champion Frank James Marshall in only seven moves.<sup>[2]</sup> It was later played by the Yugoslav master Mihailo Trajkovic<sup>[3][4]</sup> and the Soviet grandmaster Anatoly Lutikov.<sup>[5][6][7][8]</sup>

After decades of obscurity, the opening was revitalized by **International Master** Georgi Orlov, who published a booklet and a book about it in 1992 and 1998, respectively. Orlov rechristened the opening the “Black Knights’ Tango”.<sup>[9]</sup>

Since 1992, the opening has been employed by a number of strong grandmasters, including Victor Bologan, Joel Benjamin, Larry Christiansen, and Alex Yermolinsky.<sup>[10]</sup> Yermolinsky has even ventured it against Garry Kasparov.<sup>[11]</sup>

#### 8.15.2 Basic ideas

Although fairly uncommon, the “Tango” has a sounder positional basis than most other offbeat openings: Black de-

velops quickly, has a flexible pawn structure, and is prepared to strike back in the center with 3...e5, or with ...e6 and ...d5. The opening has some distinct variations but it is highly transpositional, and may transpose to the King's Indian Defense, Nimzo–Indian Defense, Bogó–Indian Defense, Chigorin Defense, Ragozin System, Catalan Opening, and English Opening.

### 8.15.3 Possible continuations

#### 3.Nf3

The most common move, preventing 3...e5.<sup>[12]</sup> Black usually responds with 3...e6, although 3...d6, intending a kind of Old Indian Defense, is also possible.<sup>[12][13]</sup> After 3...e6, White can play 4.Nc3 Bb4 (transposing to the Nimzo–Indian Defense);<sup>[14][15]</sup> 4.a3, when Black can either play 4...d5 (reaching a kind of Queen's Gambit Declined or Ragozin System),<sup>[16]</sup> or 4...d6 preparing 5...e5 or even 5...g6 ("championed by Bologan", according to Palliser), reaching a sort of King's Indian Defense;<sup>[17][18]</sup> or 4.g3, when Black can transpose to the Catalan Opening with 4...d5, recommended by Palliser<sup>[19][20]</sup> or 4...Bb4+, preferred by Orlov, which transposes to a Nimzo–Indian after 5.Nc3, or to a Bogó–Indian Defense after 5.Bd2 or 5.Nbd2.<sup>[19][21]</sup>

#### 3.Nc3

This is White's second most popular move.<sup>[22]</sup> After the thematic 3...e5, one possibility for White is 4.Nf3, transposing to an English Opening.<sup>[23]</sup> Palliser recommends 4...e4!? in response, while Orlov prefers 4...exd4 5.Nxd4 Bb4.<sup>[23][24]</sup> Instead, the main line is 4.d5 Ne7.<sup>[25]</sup> Now the game may continue in "Tango" fashion, for example with 5.Nf3 Ng6, or transpose to the King's Indian Defense with, for example, 5.Nf3 d6 6.e4 (6.Bg5!?) g6 7.Be2 Bg7 8.O-O O-O, reaching the main line of the King's Indian by transposition.<sup>[26]</sup>

Another interesting but relatively unexplored idea is 3...e6, allowing White to play 4.e4 (other moves such as 4.d5, 4.Bg5, 4.a3, 4.f3, and 4.Nf3 are also possible), whereupon Black follows up with 4...d5. From that position, the main possibilities are 5.e5 (the main line), 5.exd5, 5.cxd5, and 5.Bg5. These possibilities can also be reached via transposition from the Flohr–Mikenas Variation of the English Opening (1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.e4), although if Black wishes to play this way, the optimal move order is 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nc6.

#### 3.d5

This ambitious move is playable but rarely seen.<sup>[27]</sup> Black normally responds with 3...Ne5. Then after 4.e4 (inviting 4...Nxe4?? 5.Qd4 winning a knight), Black struck back in the center with 4...Ng6 5.f4 e5 in the seminal game Sämisch–Torre, Moscow 1925.<sup>[1]</sup> However, Orlov considers both Torre's fourth and fifth moves inferior.<sup>[28]</sup> He and Palliser both recommend instead 4...e6,<sup>[28][29]</sup> after which play can become extremely sharp. For example, Elburg–Simmelink, correspondence 1999 continued 5.f4 Ng6 6.Bd3 exd5 7.e5?! Ne4 8.cxd5 Qh4+ 9.g3 Bb4+! 10.Bd2? (Better is 10.Nc3! Nxc3! 11.bxc3 Bxc3+ 12.Bd2 Bxd2+ 13.Qxd2 Qe7 14.Nf3 d6 15.Bb5+! Kf8 16.Qc3 with some practical chances for the sacrificed pawn).<sup>[30]</sup> Nxg3 11.Nf3 (see diagram at left) Nxf4! 12.Bf1! (12.Nxh4?? Nxd3#!; 12.Bxb4? Nxd3+ 13.Qxd3 Qxb4+ is hopeless for White.<sup>[31]</sup> Bxd2+ 13.Nbxd2 (see diagram at right; 13.Qxd2? Nxf1+ 14.Nxh4 Nxd2 is winning for Black.) Qh3! 14.Rg1 (White cannot take either of Black's two hanging pieces: 14.Bxh3 Nd3#; 14.hxg3 Qxg3#. Nor is 14.Ng5 Qg2! any better.) Nxf1 left Black with two extra pawns.<sup>[32]</sup>

### 8.15.4 References

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### 8.15.5 External links

- [Betwixt the Tango and the Budapest](#) (arguing that 3. Nf3 does not prevent 3 ..e5)

## Chapter 9

# d4 Openings – Other variations

### 9.1 Catalan Opening

The **Catalan** is a chess opening where White adopts a combination of the **Queen's Gambit** and **Réti Opening**: White plays d4 and c4 and fianchettoes the white bishop on g2. A common opening sequence is 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3, although the opening can arise from a large number of move orders (see transposition). ECO codes E01–E09 are for lines with 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2, and others are part of E00.

Black has two main approaches to choose between: in the Open Catalan he plays ...dxc4 and can either try to hold on to the pawn with ...b5 or give it back for extra time to free his game. In the Closed Catalan, Black does not capture on c4; his game can be somewhat cramped for a while, but is quite solid.

#### 9.1.1 History

The Catalan derives its name from **Catalonia**, after tournament organisers at the 1929 **Barcelona** tournament asked **Savielly Tartakower** to create a new variation in homage to the area's chess history. It had been played a few times before Tartakower's usage in the tournament, however: **Réti–Leonhardt, Berlin 1928**, for instance, transposed into an Open Catalan.

The Catalan came to prominence at the top level when both **Garry Kasparov** and **Viktor Korchnoi** played it in their Candidates Semifinal match (part of the process to determine who would challenge world champion **Anatoly Karpov** for the title) in London in 1983: five games of the eleven-game match were Catalans.

In 2004, **Ruben Felgaer** won a tournament celebrating the 75th anniversary of **Barcelona 1929** and the birth of the Catalan Opening, ahead of Grandmasters **Viktor Korchnoi**, **Mihail Marin**, **Lluís Comas** and **Viktor Moskalenko** and International Master **Manel Granados**. Each game in the tournament, which was also held in **Barcelona**, began with

the moves 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6.

With its use by **Vladimir Kramnik**, the Catalan has recently gained a good deal of attention by high-level GMs. Kramnik played the opening three times in the **World Chess Championship 2006**. The Catalan was also played four times by **Viswanathan Anand** in the **World Chess Championship 2010**; in both instances the opponent was **Veselin Topalov**, and in each instance White scored two more points than Black.

#### 9.1.2 Open Catalan, Classical Line

Open Catalan, Classical line

The **Open Catalan, Classical line** begins 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 dxc4 5.Nf3 Be7. White trades the pawn for a lead in development. Without the d5 pawn, White's kingside bishop hinders Black's queenside development. The Open Catalan line here has been a favorite of **Anatoly Karpov** and **Efim Geller** as Black and **Oleg Romanishin** with the white pieces. Usually, white will recover the pawn with Qc2 and a4, Ne5, or Qa4. In order to hold the pawn, Black will have to seriously weaken the queenside with ...a6 and ...b5. The ECO code is E05.

#### 9.1.3 Illustrative games

Kramnik–Anand, Wijk aan Zee chess tournament, 2007

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qc2 a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Bd2 Ra7 11.Rc1 Be4 12.Qb3 Nc6 13.e3 Qa8 14.Qd1 Nb8 15.Ba5 Rc8 16.a3 Bd6 17.Nbd2 Bd5 18.Qf1 Nbd7 19.b4 e5 20.dxe5 Bxe5 21.Nxe5 Nxe5 22.f3 Nc4 23.Nxc4 Bxc4 24.Qf2 Re8 25.e4 c6 26.Rd1 Rd7 27.Rxd7 Nxd7 28.Rd1 Qb7 29.Rd6 f6 30.f4 Re6 31.Rd2 Re7 32.Qd4 Nf8 33.Qd8 Rd7 34.Rxd7 Qxd7 35.Qxd7 Nxd7

36.e5 fxe5 37.Bxc6 Nf6 38.Bb7 exf4 39.gxf4 Nd5 40.Kf2 Nxf4 41.Ke3 g5 42.Bxa6 Kf7 43.a4 Ke7 44.Bxb5 Bxb5 45.axb5 Kd7 46.Ke4 Ne2 47.Bb6 g4 48.Bf2 Nc3 49.Kf5 Nxb5 50.Kxg4 Ke6 51.Kg5 Kf7 52.Kf5 Ke7 53.Bc5 1–0<sup>[1]</sup>

Kramnik–Carlsen, Dortmund Sparkassen Chess Meeting, 2007

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.d4 Be7 5.Bg2 0–0 6.0–0 dxc4 7.Qc2 a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Bd2 Nc6 11.e3 Nb4 12.Bxb4 Bxb4 13.a3 Be7 14.Nbd2 Rc8 15.b4 a5 16.Ne5 Nd5 17.Nb3 axb4 18.Na5 Ba8 19.Nac6 Bxc6 20.Nxc6 Qd7 21.Bxd5 exd5 22.axb4 Rfe8 23.Ra5 Bf8 24.Ne5 Qe6 25.Rxb5 Rb8 26.Rxb8 Rxb8 27.Qxc7 Bd6 28.Qa5 Bxb4 29.Rb1 Qd6 30.Qa4 1–0<sup>[2]</sup>

### 9.1.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

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- Ideas for Black against the Catalan: 4...Bb4+

## 9.2 Blackmar-Diemer Gambit

The **Blackmar–Diemer Gambit** (or **BDG**) is a chess opening characterized by the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. e4 dxe4
3. Nc3

where White intends to follow up with f2–f3, usually on the fourth move. White obtains a move and a half-open f-file in return for a pawn, and as with most gambits, White aims to achieve rapid development and active posting of his pieces in order to rapidly build up an attack at the cost of the gambit pawn. It is one of the very few gambits available to White after 1.d4.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 9.2.1 History

The Blackmar–Diemer Gambit arose as a development of the earlier Blackmar Gambit, named after **Armand Blackmar**, a relatively little-known New Orleans player of the late 19th century who popularized its characteristic moves (1.d4 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.f3) and was the first player to publish analysis on the opening in the chess literature.<sup>[2]</sup> The popularity of the original Blackmar Gambit, however, was short-lived, as it was basically unsound, allowing Black to secure a superior position after White’s immediate 3.f3 with 3...e5!. In 1889, Ignatz von Popiel came up with the idea of 3.Nc3, though his main idea was to meet 3...Nf6 with 4.Bg5 (rather than the more usual 4.f3) and provided analysis of the **Lemberger Counter-Gambit** (3.Nc3 e5).

The evolved, modern form of this gambit owes much to the German master **Emil Josef Diemer** (1908–90), who popularized the continuation 3.Nc3 Nf6 and then 4.f3 (when 4...e5? is ineffective as 5.dxe5 hits Black’s knight, and after 5...Qxd1+ 6.Kxd1 the knight has to retreat to d7 or g8). The position resulting after 3... Nf6 4.f3 reflects the main line of the gambit accepted, although other Black responses on move three are possible. After many years of analysis, Diemer wrote a book on the opening in the late 1950s, titled *Vom Ersten Zug An Auf Matt!* (*Toward Mate From The First Move!*), with most of the published analysis devoted to the **Ryder Gambit** (and associated **Halosar Trap**), a double-pawn sacrifice characterized by the moves 4...exf3 5.Qxf3.

This gambit is considered an aggressive opening, but its soundness continues to be the subject of much debate both on and off the chessboard. The ChessOK Opening Tree Mode lists the Blackmar–Diemer as scoring 49% wins for White, 34% wins for Black, and 17% draws.<sup>[3]</sup> Dismissed

by many masters on the one hand, and embraced enthusiastically by many amateurs on the other, many consider that Black has good chances of defending successfully and converting the extra pawn in the **endgame**, while theory suggests that Black has many ways to equalize. As a result, this opening is rarely seen in top-level play, but enjoys a certain popularity among **club** players. Some titled players, including International Master **Gary Lane**, consider the opening to be suitable at the club level and for young and improving players. In one of his *Keybooks*, the Rev Tim Sawyer said, “Stop playing for the endgame, play to end the game! Be a winner. Play the Blackmar–Diemer Gambit!”<sup>[4]</sup> On the other hand, Sam Collins (in his book *Understanding the Chess Openings*) noted the tendency for some Blackmar–Diemer fanatics to try to get the opening in every game, thus limiting their chess experience, and concluded, “Nobody who plays good chess plays this line, and nobody who plays good chess ever will.”<sup>[5]</sup> Other dismissive quotes include “playing the Blackmar–Diemer Gambit is like shopping for a tombstone” (Andrew Martin)<sup>[6]</sup> and “To convince an adherent of the BDG that it is unsound, is like trying to convince a child that there is no Santa Claus.” (Kevin Denny).<sup>[7]</sup> As a result of the intense controversy surrounding the opening, much of the literature on the opening is lacking in objectivity.<sup>[8]</sup>

## 9.2.2 Main variations

It is easy for Black to decline the gambit on the second move with 2...e6 (leading to a **French Defence**) or 2...c6 (leading to a **Caro-Kann Defence**), although doing so does not eliminate White’s ability to offer alternative gambits such as the **Diemer-Duhm Gambit** (2...e6 3.c4) or the **Alapin-Diemer Gambit** (2...e6 3.Be3), or for instance 2...c6 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.f3 or 4.Bc4 intending 5.f3.

## 9.2.3 Main line

After 1.d4 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.f3 exf3 5.Nxf3, Black has five main options:

### Gunderam Defence: 5...Bf5

The line 5...Bf5 (along with most of the ...c6/...Bf5 defences for Black in general) was extensively analysed by Gerhart Gunderam, who published his analysis in a book *Blackmar–Diemer Gambit* in 1984.<sup>[9]</sup> The main response for White is 6.Ne5, intending to attack the black bishop with an advance of the kingside pawns and, if appropriate, weaken Black’s kingside pawn structure with Ne5xBg6. Black can respond with 6...e6, when after 7.g4, 7...Be4 leads to tremendous complications, e.g. after 8.Nxe4 Nxe4

9.Qf3 Qxd4 10.Qxf7+ Kd8 11.Qf4.<sup>[10]</sup> More common is 7...Bg6, which leads to quieter play, when White’s best response is probably 8.Bg2 c6 9.h4, with a sustained kingside initiative in return for the pawn.<sup>[11]</sup> However, Black also has the option 6...c6 intending 7.g4 Be6, when White has to play accurately to prove enough compensation for the pawn after 8.g5 Nd5 or 8.Bc4 Nd5 9.Qe2 Nd7.<sup>[12]</sup> White has an alternative in 6.Bd3, directly challenging the bishop, but Christoph Scheerer doubts that White gets enough compensation after 6...Bxd3 7.Qxd3 c6 intending ...e6, ...Nbd7, ...Be7 and ...0-0 with a solid position.<sup>[13]</sup>

### Teichmann Defence: 5...Bg4

The move 5...Bg4 pins the knight on f3, often with the intention of swapping it off and undermining White’s central control.<sup>[14]</sup> White’s best response is to attack the bishop immediately with 6.h3, when play often continues 6...Bxf3 7.Qxf3 c6 (but not 7...Nc6, when 8.Bb5 is good for White). In this position, White can defend the attacked d-pawn with 8.Qf2 (the **Ciesielski Variation**), but this allows Black an easy game by preparing ...e7–e5, e.g. after 8...Nbd7 9.Bd3 e5.<sup>[15]</sup> Alternatively, 8.Be3 is the **Classical Variation**, where White aims for a slow buildup to a kingside offensive. White’s other main alternative is 8.g4!?, the **Seidel–Hall Attack**, where White is happy to sacrifice the d-pawn in order to gain an increased initiative on the kingside, e.g. after 8...Qxd4 9.Be3 Qe5 10.0-0-0 e6 11.g5. Black can decline the pawn, e.g. after 8...e6 9.g5 Nd5 10.Bd3, leading to sharp play.<sup>[16]</sup> Alternatively, after 6.h3, Black can retreat the bishop with 6...Bh5 7.g4 Bg6 8.Ne5, a line which often transposes to the Gunderam Defence line 5...Bf5 6.Ne5 e6 7.g4 Bg6 after a subsequent h3–h4, as White’s extra tempo with h3 is not particularly useful.<sup>[17]</sup>

### Euwe Defence: 5...e6

The 5...e6 line, analysed by **Max Euwe**, aims to reach a French Defence type position, but with Black having an extra pawn. Play usually continues 6.Bg5 Be7, when White’s most popular option is 7.Bd3. Black can attack the centre immediately with 7...c5!? here, as recommended by Joe Gallagher and James Rizzitano.<sup>[18]</sup> Play can continue 8.dxc5 Qa5 9.0-0 Qxc5+ 10.Kh1, when White has to play accurately to prove compensation for the pawn. Alternatively 7...Nc6 can be considered the main line of this variation, when 8.0-0 Nxd4 9.Kh1 is the notorious **Zilbermints Gambit**, sacrificing a second pawn in order to increase White’s initiative. The Zilbermints Gambit has scored well in practice, but objectively it probably does not give White enough compensation for two pawns. However, the alternative 8.a3, despite the loss of time, offers White good

compensation for the pawn, and White can also consider 8.Qd2, allowing the trade of the bishop on d3 but avoiding any loss of time.<sup>[19]</sup> White's main alternative to 7.Bd3 is 7.Qd2, aiming to castle queenside and giving additional support to the d4-pawn, while aiming to launch a kingside offensive with Qd2–f4 and meeting ...h6 with a dangerous Bxh6 sacrifice. Play can continue 7...0-0 8.0-0-0 (8.Bd3 c5! is better for Black) 8...c5 9.Qf4!? cxd4 10.Rxd4<sup>[20]</sup> or 7...h6 8.Bh4 (8.Bf4 is also possible, aiming to keep the Bxh6 sacrifice possibility open, but allowing 8...Bb4 9.Bc4 Ne4)<sup>[21]</sup> 8...Ne4 9.Nxe4 Bxh4+ 10.g3 Be7 11.Bg2, when White has some compensation for the pawn but the final verdict on the resulting positions is still yet to be reached.

### Bogoljubow Defence: 5...g6

The Bogoljubow Defence was played by Diemer himself in a game against Bogoljubow. By fianchettoing the king's bishop Black aims to gain increased pressure against the d4-pawn following a subsequent ...c5. White's most common response is the **Studier Attack**, 6.Bc4 Bg7 7.0-0 0-0 8.Qe1, intending Qh4, Bh6 and piling pressure on the kingside, sacrificing pawns at d4 and c2 if appropriate, and Black has to play accurately in order to survive. However, after Peter Leisebein's 8...Nc6 9.Qh4 Bg4!, it is doubtful if White obtains enough compensation for the pawn against accurate play.<sup>[22]</sup> An alternative approach is to castle queenside, play Bh6 and then launch the h-pawn against the black kingside. The best way to carry out this approach is via 6.Bf4, as 6.Bg5 (as played by Bogoljubow in his game against Diemer) is well met by 6...Bg7 7.Qd2 0-0 8.0-0-0 c5!, when Black stands better.<sup>[23]</sup> If Black tries the same approach against 6.Bf4, i.e. 6...Bg7 7.Qd2 0-0 8.0-0-0 c5, then 9.d5 a6 10.d6! gives White good chances.<sup>[24]</sup>

### Ziegler Defence: 5...c6

Black's most critical response to the Blackmar–Diemer Gambit is 5...c6, known as the Ziegler Defence due to Diemer's tendency to name lines after opponents that first played them against him, but most of the theory of the line was established by Gerhart Gunderam, who advocated 5...Bf5.<sup>[25]</sup> Most modern authors recommend this as Black's antidote to the BDG,<sup>[26]</sup> sometimes via O'Kelly's move order 4...c6. The old main line runs 6.Bc4 Bf5 7.0-0 e6 8.Ne5, when Black should avoid 8...Bxc2?! 9.Nxf7!, but instead play 8...Bg6!, when White ends up with very little to show for the lost pawn.<sup>[27]</sup> More dangerous for Black is 8.Ng5, the **Alchemy Variation**, where Black has to be careful not to fall for various sacrifices on e6 and f7, but White probably does not get enough compensation for the pawn after 8...Bg6 9.Ne2 Bd6. German FIDE master Stefan Bucker regards Black as clearly better af-

ter 10.Nf4 Bxf4 11.Bxf4 0-0,<sup>[28]</sup> but Christoph Scheerer believes that White can generate attacking chances with 12.c3 h6 13.Qg4!?.<sup>[29]</sup> In view of White's problems proving compensation in these lines, ChessCafe.com reviewer **Carsten Hansen** concluded, "despite all the smoke and mirrors, the Blackmar–Diemer Gambit still isn't viable beyond club-level or rapid-play games".<sup>[30]</sup> However, Lev Gutman proposed the alternative 7.Bg5 e6 8.Nh4!? Bg6 9.Nxg6 hxg6 10.Qd3, intending to castle queenside and tie Black down to the f7-pawn, promising long-term positional compensation for the pawn.<sup>[28]</sup> There are currently insufficient practical tests to determine whether it amounts to enough compensation for the lost pawn.<sup>[31]</sup> Black cannot easily deviate from this line, since after 7...Nbd7 White continues 8.Qe2 e6 9.0-0-0, aiming to launch a strong attack down the e and f-files, and if 9...Bb4 then 10.d5!. If White tries to enter this setup after 7...e6 8.Qe2, however, then 8...Bb4! prevents White from safely castling queenside, leaving White with insufficient compensation for the pawn.<sup>[31]</sup> White also has the dangerous, though probably objectively insufficient, second pawn sacrifice 7.g4, analysed extensively by Stefan Bucker.<sup>[28]</sup> In the 5...c6 move-order White has the alternative 6.Bd3, usually intending to sacrifice a second pawn after 6...Bg4 7.h3 Bxf3 8.Qxf3 Qxd4, leading to sharp complications, though Black can transpose back to the Classical Variation of the Teichmann Defence with 8...e6, since White's only good response is 9.Be3.<sup>[32]</sup> Black can prevent this 6.Bd3 possibility by using O'Kelly's move-order 4...c6.

### Ryder Gambit: 5.Qxf3

Alternatively, White can offer a second pawn at move 5 with 5.Qxf3. This line can lead to the **Halosar Trap** after 5...Qxd4 6.Be3 Qb4 7.0-0-0 Bg4? 8.Nb5!, but according to Gary Lane, White is having serious problems proving enough compensation for the sacrificed pawns after 6...Qg4 7.Qf2 e5, while retaking on f3 with the queen rather than the knight may also be detrimental to White's chances if Black simply declines the second pawn with, say, 5...e6 or 5...e6.<sup>[33]</sup>

## 9.2.4 Fourth-move alternatives for Black

### O'Kelly Defence: 4...c6

Many sources recommend the O'Kelly Defence as a means of transposing to the Ziegler Defence while cutting out White's 6.Bd3 possibility, since White has nothing better than 5.Bc4, when 5...exf3 6.Nxf3 Bf5 transposes directly to the 6.Bc4 Bf5 variation of the Ziegler Defence. Alternatively, 5.Nxe4 is likely to land White in an inferior version of the Fantasy Variation of the **Caro–Kann Defence**, with equality at best in positions that may not attract Blackmar-

Diemer players, 5.fxe4 e5! is good for Black and other bishop moves allow Black to achieve superior versions of standard Blackmar–Diemer Gambit variations.<sup>[28][34]</sup> 4...c6 also has some independent value, for example **Evgeny Bareev** used the continuation 5.f3 b5!? in a game against **Nigel Short**, achieving a superior position after 6.Bb3 Be6 7.fxe4 b4 8.Nce2 Nxe4, but 8.Na4!? improves for White and may give sufficient compensation for the pawn.<sup>[35]</sup> Black can also try 5...Bf5, when White must play accurately to prove enough compensation, but probably obtains sufficient play after 6.g4 Bg6 7.g5 Nd5 8.fxe4 Nxc3 9.bxc3.<sup>[36]</sup>

### Vienna Defence: 4...Bf5

The Vienna Defence was recommended by Matthias Wahls in his book *Modernes Skandinavisch*, where he saw it as a refutation of the Blackmar–Diemer Gambit.<sup>[37]</sup> White can play for compensation for a pawn with 5.fxe4 Nxe4 6.Qf3, when both 6...Nxc3 and 6...Nd6 lead to complicated positions in which Black often tries to return a pawn on b7 in order to catch up on development, and in some cases secure a positional advantage. White often does best to continue with a gambit policy and simply continue developing. The main line runs 6...Nd6 7.Bf4 e6 8.0-0-0 c6 9.g4 Bg6 10.Qe3 Be7, when Black is solid, but White retains enough compensation for the pawn.<sup>[38]</sup> Alternatively, 5.g4 aims to regain the pawn in most cases, e.g. after 5...Bg6 6.g5 Nd5 7.Nxe4 Nc6 8.Bb5 e6 9.Bxc6+ bxc6 10.Ne2 c5 11.dxc5 Nb4, when in a reversal of roles, White has an extra pawn but Black has the initiative and a superior pawn structure.<sup>[39]</sup> White can use 5.g4 as a gambit option by continuing with 6.h4!?, which leads to sharp play and approximately equal chances.<sup>[40]</sup>

### Langeheinicke Defence: 4...e3

The push with 4...e3 is often used by strong players to avoid the complications arising from 4...exf3 5.Nxf3, but it is one of Black's weaker options against the Blackmar–Diemer as returning the pawn in this way does not significantly slow down White's initiative, and thus Black struggles to fully equalize in this line. In most lines White must seek to place a knight on f4 (taking the sting out of ...Nd5) in order to secure an advantage.<sup>[41]</sup>

## 9.2.5 Third-move alternatives for Black

### Lemberger Counter-Gambit: 3...e5

The Lemberger Counter-Gambit is an important alternative, where Black counterattacks against the d4-pawn instead of defending the attacked e4-pawn. White can head

for a drawish endgame with 4.dxe5, e.g. 4...Qxd1+ 5.Kxd1 Nc6 6.Nxe4 Nxe5, or 5.Nxd1 Nc6 6.Bf4, with equality and few winning chances for either side.<sup>[42]</sup> Since these positions typically do not attract gambiteers, White often chooses a riskier response in order to generate winning chances, such as 4.Qh5, 4.Nge2 or 4.Nxe4. Both 4.Qh5 and 4.Nge2 are well met by 4...Nc6!, when Black has good chances of obtaining an advantage, while against 4.Nxe4 the most critical continuation is 4...Qxd4, when White can continue with either 5.Qe2 or 5.Bd3, with complications and some compensation for the pawn in either case, but it is unclear if it is enough.<sup>[43]</sup>

### Other options for Black

3...f5 is an important option for Black, since 4.f3 is well met by 4...e5!, with some advantage for Black. Instead White does better to prevent ...e5 with 4.Bf4, and then obtain compensation for a pawn with a subsequent f3.<sup>[44]</sup> 3...Bf5 is well met by 4.f3, and if 4...exf3 then 5.Qxf3 attacking the bishop (thus Black may be better off transposing to the Vienna Defence with 4...Nf6).<sup>[45]</sup> 3...c6 and 3...e6 transpose to the **Caro-Kann Defence** and **French Defence** respectively, and in the former case White can continue in Blackmar–Diemer Gambit style with 4.f3 or 4.Bc4 intending 5.f3 (which often transposes to the O'Kelly Defence). After 3...e6, however, White cannot easily force a Blackmar–Diemer Gambit type position as 4.f3 Bb4 is awkward.

## 9.2.6 Related gambit ideas

Since Black can sidestep the BDG in several ways, BDG adherents have developed related gambits:

- 1.d4 d5 2.e4 c6 (the **Caro-Kann Defence**) 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.f3 was invented by **Philip Stuart Milner-Barry** in 1932 and 4.Bc4 Nf6 (or Bf5) 5.f3 by **Heinrich Von Hennig** in 1920 and thus are older than Diemer's idea.
- 1.d4 d5 2.e4 e6 (the **French Defense**) 3.Be3 is the **Alapin-Diemer Gambit**; sometimes White plays the typical f2–f3 a bit later.
- 1.d4 d5 2.e4 e6 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.f3 and 3...Nf6 4.Bg5 dxe4 5.f3 are very rare.
- 1.d4 d5 2.e4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 dxe4 6.f3 is the **Winckelmann–Reimer Gambit**.
- 1.d4 d5 2.e4 Nc6 (the **Nimzowitsch Defence**) 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.d5 may be followed by 5.f3 or 5.f4.
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.f3 d5 (c5 may lead to a kind of **Benoni**) 3.e4 dxe4 4.Nc3 simply transposes.

- 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.e4 Nxe4 is called the Hübsch Gambit.
- 1.d4 f5 2.e4 (the Staunton Gambit)
- 1.f3 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.Nc3 is the Gedult Gambit.
- 1.e4 d5 2.d4 is also a surprising transposition against the Scandinavian Defense.

The list is incomplete and transpositions abound.

### 9.2.7 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 9.2.8 References

- [1] *Blackmar–Diemer Gambit*, Chess Digest (1977), p.5.
- [2] Armand Edward Blackmar at Chessgames.com.
- [3] [http://chessok.com/?page\\_id=352](http://chessok.com/?page_id=352)
- [4] Scheerer 2011, p. 9.
- [5] “Checkpoint: Bishops before knights” (PDF). Retrieved 2011-11-06.
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- [7] “Topnotch analysis of the Blackmar–Diemer”. Retrieved 2011-11-06.
- [8] Scheerer 2011, p. 10
- [9] Scheerer 2011, p. 206.
- [10] Scheerer 2011, p. 216
- [11] Scheerer 2011, p. 218
- [12] Scheerer 2011, p. 219.
- [13] Scheerer 2011, p. 207
- [14] Scheerer 2011, p. 233.
- [15] Scheerer 2011, p. 258
- [16] Scheerer 2011, p. 262.
- [17] Scheerer 2011, p. 234
- [18] Scheerer 2011, p. 145
- [19] Scheerer 2011, p. 155.
- [20] Scheerer 2011, p. 163
- [21] Scheerer 2011, p. 167

- [22] Scheerer 2011, p. 200
- [23] Scheerer 2011, p. 170
- [24] Scheerer 2011, p. 204
- [25] Scheerer 2011, p. 277
- [26] Avrukh, Boris, *Grandmaster Repertoire 11, Beating 1.d4 Sidelines*, Quality Chess, 2012, Chapter 2.
- [27] Scheerer 2011, p. 286
- [28] “Over the Horizons: How to Detect a Novelty” (PDF). Retrieved 2010-05-07.
- [29] Scheerer 2011, p. 293
- [30] “Checkpoint: Good and Bad Weapons” (PDF). Retrieved 2011-11-06.
- [31] Scheerer 2011, p. 279
- [32] Scheerer 2011, p. 300
- [33] “Gary Lane on Ryder Gambit”. Retrieved 2011-11-06.
- [34] Scheerer 2011, p. 96
- [35] Scheerer 2011, p. 100
- [36] Scheerer 2011, p. 101
- [37] Scheerer 2011, p. 103
- [38] Scheerer 2011, p. 116
- [39] Scheerer 2011, p. 129
- [40] Scheerer 2011, p. 120
- [41] Scheerer 2011, p. 84
- [42] Scheerer 2011, p. 16
- [43] Scheerer 2011, p. 49
- [44] Scheerer 2011, p. 68
- [45] Scheerer 2011, p. 60

### 9.2.9 Further reading

- Avrukh, Boris (2012). *Grandmaster Repertoire 11, Beating 1.d4 Sidelines*. Quality Chess. ISBN 978-1-907982-12-5.
- Lane, Gary (1995). *Blackmar–Diemer Gambit*. Batsford Chess Library / An Owl Book / Henry Holt and Company. ISBN 0-8050-4230-X.
- Purser, Tom & Anders Tejler (1998). *Blackmar, Diemer & Gedult*. Blackmar Press. ISBN 0-9619606-3-9.

- Sawyer, Tim (1992). *Blackmar–Diemer Gambit Keybook*. Thinkers’ Press.
- Scheerer, Christoph (2011). *The Blackmar–Diemer Gambit: A modern guide to a fascinating chess opening*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-598-5.
- Schiller, Eric (1986). *Blackmar Diemer Gambit*. Thinkers Pr Inc / Chessco. ISBN 0-931462-52-5.

### 9.2.10 External links

- Tom Purser’s BDG Pages
- Blackmar Diemer opening theory
- Emil Diemer (1908–90) et les gambits sur le site Mieux jouer aux échecs
- Blackmar–Diemer Gambit Games
- Tim Sawyer’s blog
- Opening Report: 1.d4 d5 2.e4 (6503 games)
- Stefan Bücker (2009). “Over the Horizons” (PDF). Chesscafe.com.

## 9.3 Diemer-Duhm Gambit

The **French Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. e4 e6

The French has a reputation for solidity and resilience, though it can result in a somewhat cramped game for Black in the early stages. Black often gains counterattacking possibilities on the queenside while White tends to concentrate on the kingside.

### 9.3.1 Basics

Position after 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5

Following the opening moves 1.e4 e6, the game usually continues 2.d4 d5 (see below for alternatives). White makes a claim to the centre, while Black immediately challenges the pawn on e4.

White’s options include defending the e4 pawn with 3.Nc3 or 3.Nd2, exchanging with 3.exd5, or advancing the pawn with 3.e5, each of which lead to different types of positions. Note that 3.Bd3 allows 3...dxe4 4.Bxe4 Nf6, after which White must concede to Black either a tempo or the advantage of the two bishops.

### 9.3.2 General themes

Typical pawn structure

See the diagram for the pawn structure most typical of the French. Black has more space on the queenside, so tends to focus on that side of the board, almost always playing ...c7–c5 at some point to attack White’s pawn chain at its base, and may follow up by advancing his a- and b-pawns.

Alternatively or simultaneously, Black will play against White’s centre, which is cramping his position. The flank attack ...c7–c5 is usually insufficient to achieve this, so Black will often play ...f7–f6. If White supports the pawn on e5 by playing f2–f4, then Black has two common ideas. Black may strike directly at the f-pawn by playing ...g7–g5. The pawn on g5 may also threaten to advance to g4 to drive away a white knight on f3, augmenting Black’s play against the White centre. Another idea is to play ...fxe5, and if White recaptures with fxe5, then Black gains an open f-file for his rook. Then, as White usually has a knight on f3 guarding his pawns on d4 and e5, Black may sacrifice the exchange with ...Rxf3 to destroy the white centre and attack the king. On the other hand, if White plays dxe5, then the a7–g1 diagonal is opened, making it less desirable for White to castle kingside.

After 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.f4 0-0 8.Nf3 c5 9.Bd3

White usually tries to exploit his extra space on the kingside, where he will often play for a mating attack. White tries to do this in the Alekhine–Chatard attack, for example. Another example is the following line of the Classical French: 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.f4 0-0 8.Nf3 c5 9.Bd3 (see diagram). White’s light-square bishop eyes the weak h7-pawn, which is usually defended by a knight on f6 but here it has been pushed away by e5. A typical way for White to continue his attack is 9...cxd4 10.Bxh7+ Kxh7 11.Ng5+ when Black must give up his queen to avoid being mated, continuing with 11...Qxg5 12.fxg5 dxc3. Black has three minor pieces for the queen, which gives him a slight material superiority, but his king is vulnerable and White has good attacking chances.

Apart from a piece attack, White may play for the advance of his kingside pawns (an especially common idea in the endgame), which usually involves f2–f4, g2–g4 and then f4–f5 to utilise his natural spatial advantage on that side of the board. A white pawn on f5 can be very strong as it may threaten to capture on e6 or advance to f6. Sometimes pushing the h-pawn to h5 or h6 may also be effective. A modern idea is for White to gain space on the queenside by playing a2–a3 and b2–b4. If implemented successfully, this

will further restrict Black's pieces.

### Tarrasch–Teichmann, 1912

Position after 15...Nxc5

One of the drawbacks of the French Defence for Black is his queen's bishop, which is blocked in by his pawn on e6. If Black is unable to free it by means of the pawn breaks ...c5 and/or ...f6, it can remain passive throughout the game. An often-cited example of the potential weakness of this bishop is *S. Tarrasch–R. Teichmann, San Sebastián 1912*, in which the diagrammed position was reached after fifteen moves of a Classical French.

Black's position is passive because his light-square bishop is hemmed in by pawns on a6, b5, d5, e6 and f7. White will probably try to exchange Black's knight, which is the only one of his pieces that has any scope. Although it might be possible for Black to hold on for a draw, it is not easy and, barring any mistakes by White, Black will have few chances to create counterplay, which is why, for many years, the classical lines fell out of favour, and 3...Bb4 began to be seen more frequently after World War I, due to the efforts of Nimzowitsch and Botvinnik. In Tarrasch–Teichmann, White won after 41 moves. In order to avoid this fate, Black usually makes it a priority early in the game to find a useful post for the bishop. Black can play ...Bd7–a4 to attack a pawn on c2, which occurs in many lines of the Winawer Variation. If Black's f-pawn has moved to f6, then Black may also consider bringing the bishop to g6 or h5 via d7 and e8. If White's light-square bishop is on the f1–a6 diagonal, Black can try to exchange it by playing ...b6 and ...Ba6, or ...Qb6 followed by ...Bd7–Bb5.

A general theme in the Advance French is that White would like to put his light-square bishop on d3, maximising its scope. White cannot play this move immediately after 5...Qb6 without losing the d4 pawn. Black cannot gain the extra pawn immediately since 6.Bd3 cxd4 7.cxd4 Nxd4? 8.Nxd4 Qxd4?? 9.Bb5+ wins the black queen by a *discovered attack* with check. Thus, *theory* holds that Black should play 7...Bd7 instead to obviate this idea. White has often sacrificed the d-pawn anyway by continuing 8.0-0 Nxd4 9.Nxd4 Qxd4 10.Nc3. This is the Milner-Barry Gambit, named after Sir *Stuart Milner-Barry*, considered of marginal soundness by present-day theory, and has never had proponents at the highest levels of play.

Another theme is that White wants to expand on the king-side and attack the black king; the long-term advantages in many French structures lie with Black, so White is often more or less forced to attack by various methods, such as driving the black knight off f5 with g4 or playing h4–h5 to expel the knight from g6. Because of the blocked centre, sacrificial mating attacks are often possible. It is said by French players that the *classic bishop sacrifice* (Bd3xh7)

should be evaluated every move. Black, however, often welcomes an attack as the French is notorious for producing defensive tactics and maneuvers that leave Black up material for an endgame. *Viktor Korchnoi* who, along with Botvinnik, was the strongest player who advocated the French, talked about how he would psychologically lure his opponents into attacking him so that they would eventually sacrifice material and he would halt his opponent's army and win the *endgame* easily.

### 9.3.3 Main line: 2.d4 d5

#### 3.Nc3

Played in over 40% of all games after 1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5, 3. Nc3 is the most commonly seen line against the French. Black has three main options, 3...dxe4 (the *Rubinstein Variation*), 3...Bb4 (the *Winawer Variation*) and 3...Nf6 (the *Classical Variation*). An eccentric idea is 3...Nc6!? 4.Nf3 Nf6 with the idea of 5.e5 Ne4; German *IM* Helmut Reefsclaeger has been fond of this move.

**Rubinstein Variation:** 3...dxe4 After 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4

This variation is named after *Akiba Rubinstein* and can also arise from a different move order: 3.Nd2 dxe4. White has freer development and more space in the centre, which Black intends to neutralise by playing ...c7–c5 at some point. This solid line has undergone a modest revival, featuring in many GM games as a drawing weapon but theory still gives White a slight edge. After 3... dxe4 4. Nxe4, Black has the following options:

- The most popular line is: 4...Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 when Black is ready for ...c5.
- 4...Bd7 5.Nf3 Bc6 (the *Fort Knox Variation*) activating the light-square bishop, which is often played by *Alexander Rustemov*.

**Winawer Variation:** 3...Bb4 This variation, named after *Szymon Winawer* and pioneered by Nimzowitsch and Botvinnik, is one of the main systems in the French, due chiefly to the latter's efforts in the 1940s, becoming the most often seen rejoinder to 3.Nc3, though in the 1980s, the Classical Variation with 3...Nf6 began a revival, and has since become more popular.

3... Bb4 pins the knight on c3, forcing White to resolve the central tension. White normally clarifies the central situation for the moment with 4. e5, gaining space and hoping

to show that Black's b4-bishop is misplaced. The main line then is: **4... c5 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. bxc3**, resulting in the diagrammed position:

After 3...Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3

While White has doubled pawns on the queenside, which form the basis for Black's counterplay, they can also help White since they strengthen his centre and give him a semi-open b-file. White has a spatial advantage on the kingside, where Black is even weaker than usual because he has traded off his dark-square bishop. Combined with the bishop pair, this gives White attacking chances, which he must attempt to utilise as the long-term features of this pawn structure favour Black.

In the diagrammed position, Black most frequently plays **6... Ne7** (The main alternative is 6...Qc7, which can simply transpose to main lines after 7.Qg4 Ne7, but Black also has the option of 7.Qg4 f5 or ...f6. 6...Qa5 has recently become a popular alternative). Now White can exploit the absence of Black's dark-square bishop by playing **7. Qg4**, giving Black two choices: he may sacrifice his kingside pawns with 7...Qc7 8.Qxg7 Rg8 9.Qxh7 cxd4 but destroy White's centre in return, the so-called "**Poisoned Pawn Variation**"; or he can play 7...0-0 8.Bd3 Nbc6, which avoids giving up material, but leaves the king on the flank where White is trying to attack. Experts on the 7.Qg4 line include **Judit Polgár**.

If the tactical complications of 7.Qg4 are not to White's taste, 7.Nf3 and 7.a4 are good positional alternatives:

**7. Nf3** is a natural developing move, and White usually follows it up by developing the king's bishop to d3 or e2 (occasionally to b5) and castling kingside. This is called the Winawer Advance Variation. This line often continues **7... Bd7 8. Bd3 c4 9. Be2 Ba4 10. 0-0 Qa5 11. Bd2 Nbc6 12. Ng5 h6 13. Nh3 0-0-0**. Its assessment is unclear, but most likely Black would be considered "comfortable" here.

The purpose behind **7. a4** is threefold: it prepares Bc1-a3, taking advantage of the absence of Black's dark-square bishop. It also prevents Black from playing ...Qa5-a4 or ...Bd7-a4 attacking c2, and if Black plays ...b6 (followed by ...Ba6 to trade off the bad bishop), White may play a5 to attack the b6-pawn.

**Sidelines** 5th move deviations for White include:

- 5.Qg4
- 5.dxc5
- 5.Nf3
- 5.Bd2

4th move deviations for White include:

- 4.exd5 exd5, transposing to a line of the Exchange Variation.
- 4.Ne2 (the **Alekhine Gambit**) 4...dxe4 5.a3 Be7 (5...Bxc3+ is necessary if Black wants to try to hold the pawn) 6.Nxe4 to prevent Black from doubling his pawns.
- 4.Bd3 defending e4.
- 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 dxe4 6.Qg4, another attempt to exploit Black's weakness on g7.
- 4.e5 c5 5.Bd2, again preventing the doubled pawns and making possible 6.Nb5, where the knight may hop into d6 or simply defend d4.
- 4.Bd2 (an old move sometimes played by Nezhmetdinov, notably against **Mikhail Tal**)

Deviations for Black include:

- 4...Ne7 although this move usually transposes to the main line.
- 4...b6 followed by ...Ba6, or 4...Qd7 with the idea of meeting 5.Qg4 with 5...f5. However, theory currently prefers White's chances in both lines.
- Another popular way for Black to deviate is 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Ba5, the **Armenian Variation**, as its theory and practice have been much enriched by players from that country, the most notable of whom is **Rafael Vaganian**. Black maintains the pin on the knight, which White usually tries to break by playing 6.b4 cxb4 7.Qg4 or 7.Nb5 (usually 7.Nb5 bxa3+ 8.c3 Bc7 9.Bxa3 and white has the upper hand).

**Classical Variation: 3...Nf6** Classical Variation 3...Nf6

This is another major system in the French. White can continue with the following options:

**4.Bg5** White threatens 5.e5, attacking the pinned knight. Black has a number of ways to meet this threat:

- **Burn Variation**, named after **Amos Burn** is the most common reply at the top level: **4... dxe4 5. Nxe4** and usually there now follows: **5... Be7 6. Bxf6 Bxf6 7. Nf3 Nd7** or **7... 0-0**, resulting in a position resembling those arising from the Rubinstein Variation. However, here Black has the bishop pair, with greater dynamic

chances (although White's knight is well placed on e4), so this line is more popular than the Rubinstein and has long been a favourite of **Evgeny Bareev**. Black can also try **5... Be7 6. Bxf6 gxf6**, as played by **Alexander Morozevich** and **Gregory Kaidanov**; by following up with ...f5 and ...Bf6, Black obtains active piece play in return for his shattered pawn structure. Another line that resembles the Rubinstein is **5... Nbd7 6. Nf3 Be7** (6...h6 is also tried) **7. Nxf6+ Bxf6**.

- **4... Be7 5. e5 Nfd7** used to be the main line and remains important, even though the Burn Variation has overtaken it in popularity. The usual continuation is **6. Bxe7 Qxe7 7. f4 0-0 8. Nf3 c5**, when White has a number of options, including 9.Bd3, 9.Qd2 and 9.dxc5. An alternative for White is the **gambit 6. h4**, which was devised by **Adolf Albin** and played by Chatard, but not taken seriously until the game **Alekhine–Fahrni**, Mannheim 1914. It is known today as the **Albin–Chatard Attack** or the **Alekhine–Chatard Attack**. After **6... Bxg5 7. hxc5 Qxc5 8. Nh3 Qe7 9. Nf4 Nc6 10. Qg4** (the reason for 8.Nh3 rather than 8.Nf3), White has sacrificed a pawn to open the h-file, thereby increasing his attacking chances on the kingside. Black may also decline the gambit in several ways such **6... a6** and **6... f6**, but most strong players prefer **6... c5**.
- A third choice for Black is to counterattack with the **McCutcheon Variation**. In this variation, the second player ignores White's threat of e4-e5 and instead plays **4... Bb4**. The main line continues: **5. e5 h6 6. Bd2 Bxc3 7. bxc3 Ne4 8. Qg4**. At this point Black may play 8...g6, which weakens the kingside dark squares but keeps the option of castling queenside, or 8...Kf8. The McCutcheon Variation is named for John Lindsay McCutcheon of **Philadelphia** (1857–1905), who brought the variation to public attention when he used it to defeat **World Champion Steinitz** in a **simultaneous exhibition in Manhattan** in 1885.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>

**4.e5 The Steinitz Variation** (named after **Wilhelm Steinitz**) is **4. e5 Nfd7 5. f4** (the most common but White has other options: 5.Nce2, the **Shirov–Anand Variation**), White gets ready to bolster his centre with c2–c3 and f2–f4. Or 5.Nf3 (aiming for piece play) **5... c5 6. Nf3 Nc6 7. Be3** (7.Nce2 transposes to the Shirov–Anand Variation; a trap is 7.Be2 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Nxe5! 9.fxe5 Qh4+ winning a pawn), Black has several options. He may step up pressure on d4 by playing 7...Qb6 or 7...cxd4 8.Nxd4 Qb6, or choose to complete his development, either beginning with the kingside by playing 7...cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5, or with the queenside by playing 7...a6 8.Qd2 b5.

### Tarrasch Variation: 3.Nd2

After 3.Nd2 Nf6

The **Tarrasch Variation** is named after **Siebert Tarrasch**. This move became particularly popular during the 1970s and early 1980s when **Anatoly Karpov** used it to great effect. Though less aggressive than the alternate 3.Nc3, it is still used by top-level players seeking a small, safe advantage.

Like 3.Nc3, 3.Nd2 protects e4, but is different in several key respects: it does not block White's c-pawn from advancing, which means he can play c3 at some point to support his d4-pawn. Hence, it avoids the **Winawer Variation** as 3...Bb4 is now readily answered by 4.c3. On the other hand, 3.Nd2 develops the knight to an arguably less active square than 3.Nc3, and in addition, it hems in White's dark-square bishop. Hence, white will typically have to spend an extra tempo moving the knight from d2 at some point before developing said bishop.

- **3... c5 4. exd5** and now Black has two ways to recapture:
  - **4... exd5** this was a staple of many old Karpov–Korchnoi battles, including seven games in their 1974 match, usually leads to Black having an isolated queen's pawn (see **isolated pawn**). The main line continues **5. Ngf3 Nc6 6. Bb5 Bd6 7. 0-0 Nge7 8. dxc5 Bxc5 9. Nb3 Bb6** with a position where, if White can neutralise the activity of Black's pieces in the middlegame, he will have a slight advantage in the ending. Another possibility for White is 5.Bb5+ Bd7 (5...Nc6 is also possible) 6.Qe2+ Be7 7.dxc5 to trade off the bishops and make it more difficult for Black to regain the pawn.
  - **4... Qxd5** is an important alternative for Black; the idea is to trade his c- and d-pawns for White's d- and e-pawns, leaving Black with an extra centre pawn. This constitutes a slight structural advantage, but in return White gains time for development by harassing Black's queen. This interplay of static and dynamic advantages is the reason why this line has become popular in the last decade. Play usually continues **5. Ngf3 cxd4 6. Bc4 Qd6 7. 0-0 Nf6** (preventing 8.Ne4) **8. Nb3 Nc6 9. Nbx4 Nxd4**, and here White may stay in the middlegame with 10.Nxd4 or offer the trade of queens with 10.Qxd4, with the former far more commonly played today.
- **3... Nf6** While the objective of 3...c5 was to break open the centre, **3... Nf6** aims to close it. After **4. e5 Nfd7 5. Bd3 c5 6. c3 Nc6** (6...b6 intends ...Ba6

next to get rid of Black's "bad" light-square bishop, a recurring idea in the French) **7. Ne2** (leaving f3 open for the queen's knight) **7... cxd4 8. cxd4 f6 9. exf6 Nxf6 10. Nf3 Bd6** Black has freed his pieces at the cost of having a **backward pawn** on e6. White may also choose to preserve his pawn on e5 by playing **4. e5 Nfd7 5. c3 c5 6. f4 Nc6 7. Ndf3**, but his development is slowed as a result, and Black will gain dynamic chances if he can open the position to advantage.

- **3... Nc6** is known as the **Guimard Variation**: after **4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nd7** Black will exchange White's cramping e-pawn next move by ...f6. However, Black does not exert any pressure on d4 because he cannot play ...c5, so White should maintain a slight advantage, with **6.Be2** or **6 Nb3**.
- **3... Be7** is known as the **Morozevich Variation**.<sup>[4]</sup> A fashionable line among top GMs in recent years, this odd-looking move aims to prove that every White move now has its drawbacks, e.g. after **4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nfd7** White cannot play f4, whereas **4.Bd3 c5 5.dxc5 Nf6** and **4.e5 c5 5. Qg4 Kf8!**? lead to obscure complications. **3...h6?**!, with a similar rationale, has also gained some adventurous followers in recent years, including GM **Alexander Morozevich**.
- Another rare line is **3... a6**, which gained some popularity in the 1970s. Similar to **3...Be7**, the idea is to play a waiting move to make White declare his intentions before Black commits to a plan of his own. **3...a6** also controls the b5-square, which is typically useful for Black in most French lines because, for example, White no longer has the option of playing **Bb5**.

#### Exchange Variation: **3.exd5 exd5**

After **3.exd5 exd5**

Many players who begin with **1.e4** find that the French Defence is the most difficult opening for them to play against due to the closed structure and unique strategies of the system. Thus, many players choose to play the exchange so that the position becomes simple and clearcut. White makes no effort to exploit the advantage of the first move, and has often chosen this line with expectation of an early draw, and indeed draws often occur if neither side breaks the symmetry. An extreme example was **Capablanca–Maróczy, Lake Hopatcong** 1926, which went: **4.Bd3 Bd6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.0-0 7.Bg5 Bg4 8.Re1 Nbd7 9.Nbd2 c6 10.c3 Qc7 11.Qc2 Rfe8 12.Bh4 Bh5 13.Bg3 Bxg3 14.hxg3 Bg6 15.Rxe8+ Rxe8 16.Bxg6 hxg6 17.Re1 Rxe1+ 18.Nxe1 Ne8 19.Nd3 Nd6 20.Qb3 a6 21.Kf1 ½–½** (the game can be viewed [here](#)).

Despite the symmetrical pawn structure, White cannot force a draw. An obsession with obtaining one sometimes results in embarrassment for White, as in **Tatai–Korchnoi, Beer Sheva** 1978, which continued **4.Bd3 c5!? 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Qe2+ Be7 7.dxc5 Nf6 8.h3 0-0 9.0-0 Bxc5 10.c3 Re8 11.Qc2 Qd6 12.Nbd2 Qg3 13.Bf5 Re2 14.Nd4 Nxd4 0–1** (the game can be watched [here](#)). A less extreme example was **Mikhail Gurevich–Short, Manila** 1990 where White, a strong Russian **grandmaster**, played openly for the draw but was ground down by Short in 42 moves.

To create genuine winning chances, White will often play **c2–c4** at some stage to put pressure on Black's d5-pawn. Black can give White an isolated queen's pawn by capturing on c4, but this gives White's pieces greater freedom, which may lead to attacking chances. This occurs in lines such as **3.exd5 exd5 4.c4** (played by GMs **Normunds Miezis** and **Maurice Ashley**) and **4.Nf3 Bd6 5.c4**, which may transpose to the **Petroff**. Conversely, if White declines to do this, Black may play ...c7–c5 himself, e.g. **4.Bd3 c5**, as in the above-cited **Tatai–Korchnoi** game.

If **c2–c4** is not played, White and Black have two main piece setups. White may put his pieces on **Nf3, Bd3, Bg5** (pinning the black knight), **Nc3, Qd2** or the queen's knight can go to **d2** instead and White can support the centre with **c3** and perhaps play **Qb3**. Conversely, when the queen's knight is on **c3**, the king's knight may go to **e2** when the enemy bishop and knight can be kept out of the key squares **e4** and **g4** by **f3**. When the knight is on **c3** in the first and last of the above strategies, White may choose either short or long castling. The positions are so symmetrical that the options and strategies are the same for both sides.

Another way to unbalance the position is for White or Black to castle on opposite sides of the board. An example of this is the line **4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Bd6 6.Nf3 Bg4 7.0-0 Nge7 8.Re1 Qd7 9.Nbd2 0-0-0**.

#### Advance Variation: **3.e5**

After **3.e5 c5 4. c3 Nc6 5. Nf3**

The main line of the Advance Variation continues **3... c5 4. c3 Nc6 5. Nf3** and then we have a branching point:

**5... Qb6**, the idea is to increase the pressure on d4 and eventually undermine the White centre. The queen also attacks the b2-square, so White's dark-square bishop cannot easily defend the d4-pawn without losing the b2-pawn. White's most common replies are **6.a3** and **6.Be2**.

**6.a3** is currently the most important line in the Advance: it prepares **7.b4**, gaining space on the queenside. Black may prevent this with **6...c4** intending to take *en passant* if White plays **b4**, which creates a closed game where Black fights

for control of the b3-square. On the other hand, Black may continue developing with 6...Nh6, intending ...Nf5, which might seem strange as White can double the pawn with Bxh6, but this is actually considered good for Black. Black plays ...Bg7 and ...0-0 and Black's king has adequate defence and White will miss his apparently 'bad' dark-square bishop.

6.Be2 is the other alternative, aiming simply to castle. Once again, a common Black response is 6...Nh6 intending 7...cxd4 8.cxd4 Nf5 attacking d4. White usually responds to this threat with 7.Bxh6 or 7.b3 preparing Bb2.

**5... Bd7** was mentioned by **Greco** as early as 1620, and was revived and popularised by **Viktor Korchnoi** in the 1970s. Now a main line, the idea behind the move is that since Black usually plays ...Bd7 sooner or later, he plays it right away and waits for White to show his hand. If White plays 6.a3 in response, modern theory says that Black equalises or is better after 6...f6! The lines are complex, but the main point is that a3 is a wasted move if the black queen is not on b6 and so Black uses the extra tempo to attack the white centre immediately.

**5...Nh6** has recently become a popular alternative

There are alternative strategies to **3... c5** that were tried in the early 20th century such as 3...b6, intending to fianchetto the bad bishop and which can transpose to **Owen's Defence** or 3...Nc6, played by **Carlos Guimard**, intending to keep the bad bishop on c8 or d7 which is passive and obtains little counterplay. Also, 4...Qb6 5.Nf3 Bd7 intending 6...Bb5 to trade off the "bad" queen's bishop is possible.

### 9.3.4 Early deviations for White

After 1.e4 e6, almost 90 percent of all games continue 2.d4 d5, but White can try other ideas. The most important of these is 2.d3 d5 3.Nd2, with a version of the **King's Indian Attack**. White will likely play Ngf3, g3, Bg2, 0-0, c3 and/or Re1 in some order on the next few moves. Black has several ways to combat this setup: 3...c5 followed by ...Nc6, ...Bd6, ...Nf6 or ...Nge7 and ...0-0 is common, 3...Nf6 4.Ngf3 Nc6 plans ...dxe4 and ...e5 to block in the Bg2, and 3...Nf6 4.Ngf3 b6 makes ...Ba6 possible if White's light-square bishop leaves the a6–f1 diagonal. 2.d3 has been used by many leading players over the years, including GMs **Pal Benko**, **Bobby Fischer** and **Lev Psakhis**.

- 2.f4 is the **Labourdonnais Variation**, named after **Louis-Charles Mahé de La Bourdonnais**, the 19th-century French master.<sup>[5]</sup>
- 2.Qe2 is the **Chigorin Variation**, which discourages 2...d5 because after 3.exd5 the black pawn is pinned, meaning Black would need to recapture with

the queen. Black usually replies 2...c5, after which play can resemble the 2.d3 variation or the Closed Variation of the **Sicilian Defence**.

- 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3 is the **Two Knights Variation**: 3...d4 and 3...Nf6 are good replies for Black.
- 2.c4 (attempting to discourage 2...d5 by Black) is the **Steiner Variation**. But Black can reply 2...d5 anyway, when after 3.cxd5 exd5 4.exd5 Nf6 the only way for White to hold on to his extra pawn on d5 is to play 5.Bb5+. Black gets good compensation in return for the pawn, however.
- 2.Bb5 has occasionally been tried. Notably, **Henry Bird** defeated **Max Fleissig** with the variation during the **Vienna 1873 chess tournament**.<sup>[6]</sup>
- 2.b3 leads to the **Réti Gambit** after 2...d5 3.Bb2 dxe4, but Black can also decline it with 3...Nf6 4.e5 Nd7 with White going for f4 and Qg4 before putting the knight on f3.

There are also a few rare continuations after 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5, including 3.Bd3 (the **Schlechter Variation**), 3.Be3 (the **Alapin Gambit**), and 3.c4 (the **Diemer-Duhm Gambit**, which can also be reached via the **Queen's Gambit Declined**).

### 9.3.5 Early deviations for Black

Although 2...d5 is the most consistent move after 1.e4 e6 2.d4, Black occasionally plays other moves. Chief among them is 2...c5, the **Franco-Benoni Defence**, so-called because it features the c7–c5 push characteristic of the **Benoni Defence**. White may continue 3.d5, when play can transpose into the Benoni, though White has extra options since c2–c4 is not mandated. 3.Nf3, transposing into a normal **Sicilian Defence**, and 3.c3, transposing into a line of the **Alapin Sicilian** (usually arrived at after 1.e4 c5 2.c3 e6 3.d4) are also common. Play may also lead back to the French; for example, 1.e4 e6 2.d4 c5 3.c3 d5 4.e5 transposes into the **Advance Variation**.

### 9.3.6 History

The French Defence is named after a match played by correspondence between the cities of London and Paris in 1834 (although earlier examples of games with the opening do exist). It was **Chamouillet**, one of the players of the Paris team, who persuaded the others to adopt this defence.<sup>[7]</sup>

As a reply to 1.e4, the French Defence received relatively little attention in the nineteenth century compared to 1...e5.

The first world chess champion Wilhelm Steinitz said “I have never in my life played the French Defence, which is the duller of all openings”.<sup>[8]</sup> In the early 20th century, Géza Maróczy was perhaps the first world-class player to make it his primary weapon against 1.e4. For a long time, it was the third most popular reply to 1.e4, behind only 1...c5 and 1...e5. However, according to the *Mega Database 2007*, in 2006, 1...e6 was second only to the Sicilian in popularity.

Historically important contributors to the theory of the defence include Mikhail Botvinnik, Viktor Korchnoi, Aron Nimzowitsch, Tigran Petrosian, Lev Psakhis, Wolfgang Uhlmann and Rafael Vaganian. More recently, its leading practitioners include Evgeny Bareev, Alexey Dreev, Mikhail Gurevich, Alexander Khalifman, Smbat Lputian, Alexander Morozevich, Teimour Radjabov, Nigel Short, Gata Kamsky, and Yuri Shulman.

The **Exchange Variation** was recommended by Howard Staunton in the 19th century,<sup>[9]</sup> but has been in decline ever since. In the early 1990s Garry Kasparov briefly experimented with it before switching to 3.Nc3. Note that Black’s game is made much easier as his queen’s bishop has been liberated. It has the reputation of giving immediate equality to Black, due to the symmetrical pawn structure.

Like the Exchange, the **Advance Variation** was frequently played in the early days of the French Defence. Aron Nimzowitsch believed it to be White’s best choice and enriched its theory with many ideas. However, the Advance declined in popularity throughout most of the 20th century until it was revived in the 1980s by GM and prominent opening theoretician Evgeny Sveshnikov, who continues to be a leading expert in this line. In recent years, it has become nearly as popular as 3.Nd2; GM Alexander Grischuk has championed it successfully at the highest levels. It is also a popular choice at the club level due to the availability of a simple, straightforward plan involving attacking chances and extra space.

### 9.3.7 ECO codes

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* includes an alphanumeric classification system for openings that is widely used in chess literature. Codes C00 to C19 are the French Defence, broken up in the following way (all apart from C00 start with the moves 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5):

- C00 – 1.e4 e6 without 2.d4, or 2.d4 without 2...d5 (early deviations)
- C01 – 2.d4 d5 (includes the Exchange Variation, 3.exd5)
- C02 – 3.e5 (Advance Variation)

- C03 – 3.Nd2 (includes 3...Be7; C03–C09 cover the Tarrasch Variation)
- C04 – 3.Nd2 Nc6 (Guimard Variation)
- C05 – 3.Nd2 Nf6
- C06 – 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3
- C07 – 3.Nd2 c5 (includes 4.exd5 Qxd5)
- C08 – 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5
- C09 – 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Ngf3 Nc6
- C10 – 3.Nc3 (includes the Rubinstein Variation, 3...dxe4)
- C11 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 (includes the Steinitz Variation, 4.e5; C11–C14 cover the Classical Variation)
- C12 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 (includes the McCutcheon Variation, 4...Bb4)
- C13 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 dxe4 (Burn Variation)
- C14 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7
- C15 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 (C15–C19 cover the Winawer Variation)
- C16 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5
- C17 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5
- C18 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 (includes the Armenian Variation, 5...Ba5)
- C19 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Nf3 and 7.a4

### 9.3.8 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 9.3.9 References

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## 9.3.10 Further reading

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- Moskalenko, Viktor (2008). *The Flexible French*. New In Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-245-1.
- Tzermiadianos, Andreas (2008). *How to Beat the French Defence: The Essential Guide to the Tarrasch*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 9781857445671.
- Vitiugov, Nikita (2010). *The French Defence*. Chess Stars. ISBN 978-954-8782-76-0.
- Moskalenko, Viktor (2010). *The Wonderful Winawer*. New In Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-327-4.

## 9.3.11 External links

- The Anatomy of the French Advance

## 9.4 Diemer-Duhm Gambit

The **French Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. e4 e6

The French has a reputation for solidity and resilience, though it can result in a somewhat cramped game for Black in the early stages. Black often gains counterattacking possibilities on the **queenside** while White tends to concentrate on the **kingside**.

### 9.4.1 Basics

Position after 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5

Following the opening moves 1.e4 e6, the game usually continues 2.d4 d5 (see **below** for alternatives). White makes a claim to the centre, while Black immediately challenges the pawn on e4.

White’s options include defending the e4 pawn with 3.Nc3 or 3.Nd2, exchanging with 3.exd5, or advancing the pawn with 3.e5, each of which lead to different types of positions. Note that 3.Bd3 allows 3...dxe4 4.Bxe4 Nf6, after which White must concede to Black either a tempo or the advantage of the two bishops.

### 9.4.2 General themes

Typical pawn structure

See the diagram for the **pawn structure** most typical of the French. Black has more space on the **queenside**, so tends to focus on that side of the board, almost always playing ...c7–c5 at some point to attack White’s pawn chain at its base, and may follow up by advancing his a- and b-pawns.

Alternatively or simultaneously, Black will play against White’s centre, which is cramping his position. The flank attack ...c7–c5 is usually insufficient to achieve this, so Black will often play ...f7–f6. If White supports the pawn on e5 by playing f2–f4, then Black has two common ideas. Black may strike directly at the f-pawn by playing ...g7–g5. The pawn on g5 may also threaten to advance to g4 to drive away a white knight on f3, augmenting Black’s play against the White centre. Another idea is to play ...fxe5, and if White recaptures with fxe5, then Black gains an open f-file for his rook. Then, as White usually has a knight on f3 guarding his pawns on d4 and e5, Black may **sacrifice the exchange** with ...Rxf3 to destroy the white centre and attack the king. On the other hand, if White plays dxe5, then

the a7–g1 diagonal is opened, making it less desirable for White to **castle** kingside.

After 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.f4 0-0 8.Nf3 c5 9.Bd3

White usually tries to exploit his extra space on the kingside, where he will often play for a mating attack. White tries to do this in the **Alekhine–Chatard** attack, for example. Another example is the following line of the Classical French: 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.f4 0-0 8.Nf3 c5 9.Bd3 (see diagram). White's light-square bishop eyes the weak h7-pawn, which is usually defended by a knight on f6 but here it has been pushed away by e5. A typical way for White to continue his attack is 9...cxd4 10.Bxh7+ Kxh7 11.Ng5+ when Black must give up his queen to avoid being mated, continuing with 11...Qxg5 12.fxg5 dxc3. Black has three minor pieces for the queen, which gives him a slight material superiority, but his king is vulnerable and White has good attacking chances.

Apart from a piece attack, White may play for the advance of his kingside pawns (an especially common idea in the endgame), which usually involves f2–f4, g2–g4 and then f4–f5 to utilise his natural spatial advantage on that side of the board. A white pawn on f5 can be very strong as it may threaten to capture on e6 or advance to f6. Sometimes pushing the h-pawn to h5 or h6 may also be effective. A modern idea is for White to gain space on the queenside by playing a2–a3 and b2–b4. If implemented successfully, this will further restrict Black's pieces.

### Tarrasch–Teichmann, 1912

Position after 15...Nxc5

One of the drawbacks of the French Defence for Black is his queen's bishop, which is blocked in by his pawn on e6. If Black is unable to free it by means of the pawn breaks ...c5 and/or ...f6, it can remain passive throughout the game. An often-cited example of the potential weakness of this bishop is **S. Tarrasch–R. Teichmann, San Sebastián 1912**, in which the diagrammed position was reached after fifteen moves of a Classical French.

Black's position is passive because his light-square bishop is hemmed in by pawns on a6, b5, d5, e6 and f7. White will probably try to exchange Black's knight, which is the only one of his pieces that has any scope. Although it might be possible for Black to hold on for a **draw**, it is not easy and, barring any mistakes by White, Black will have few chances to create counterplay, which is why, for many years, the classical lines fell out of favour, and 3...Bb4 began to be seen more frequently after World War I, due to the efforts of Nimzowitsch and Botvinnik. In Tarrasch–Teichmann,

White won after 41 moves. In order to avoid this fate, Black usually makes it a priority early in the game to find a useful post for the bishop. Black can play ...Bd7–a4 to attack a pawn on c2, which occurs in many lines of the Winawer Variation. If Black's f-pawn has moved to f6, then Black may also consider bringing the bishop to g6 or h5 via d7 and e8. If White's light-square bishop is on the f1–a6 diagonal, Black can try to exchange it by playing ...b6 and ...Ba6, or ...Qb6 followed by ...Bd7–Bb5.

A general theme in the Advance French is that White would like to put his light-square bishop on d3, maximising its scope. White cannot play this move immediately after 5...Qb6 without losing the d4 pawn. Black cannot gain the extra pawn immediately since 6.Bd3 cxd4 7.cxd4 Nxd4? 8.Nxd4 Qxd4?? 9.Bb5+ wins the black queen by a **discovered attack** with check. Thus, **theory** holds that Black should play 7...Bd7 instead to obviate this idea. White has often sacrificed the d-pawn anyway by continuing 8.0-0 Nxd4 9.Nxd4 Qxd4 10.Nc3. This is the **Milner-Barry Gambit**, named after Sir **Stuart Milner-Barry**, considered of marginal soundness by present-day theory, and has never had proponents at the highest levels of play.

Another theme is that White wants to expand on the kingside and attack the black king; the long-term advantages in many French structures lie with Black, so White is often more or less forced to attack by various methods, such as driving the black knight off f5 with g4 or playing h4–h5 to expel the knight from g6. Because of the blocked centre, sacrificial mating attacks are often possible. It is said by French players that the **classic bishop sacrifice** (Bd3xh7) should be evaluated every move. Black, however, often welcomes an attack as the French is notorious for producing defensive tactics and maneuvers that leave Black up material for an endgame. **Viktor Korchnoi** who, along with Botvinnik, was the strongest player who advocated the French, talked about how he would psychologically lure his opponents into attacking him so that they would eventually sacrifice material and he would halt his opponent's army and win the **endgame** easily.

### 9.4.3 Main line: 2.d4 d5

#### 3.Nc3

Played in over 40% of all games after **1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5, 3. Nc3** is the most commonly seen line against the French. Black has three main options, 3...dxe4 (the **Rubinstein Variation**), 3...Bb4 (the **Winawer Variation**) and 3...Nf6 (the **Classical Variation**). An eccentric idea is 3...Nc6!? 4.Nf3 Nf6 with the idea of 5.e5 Ne4; German **IM** Helmut Reefsclaeger has been fond of this move.

**Rubinstein Variation:** 3...dxe4 After 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4

This variation is named after **Akiba Rubinstein** and can also arise from a different move order: 3.Nd2 dxe4. White has freer development and more space in the centre, which Black intends to neutralise by playing ...c7–c5 at some point. This solid line has undergone a modest revival, featuring in many GM games as a drawing weapon but theory still gives White a slight edge. After 3... dxe4 4. Nxe4, Black has the following options:

- The most popular line is: 4...Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 when Black is ready for ...c5.
- 4...Bd7 5.Nf3 Bc6 (the **Fort Knox Variation**) activating the light-square bishop, which is often played by **Alexander Rustemov**.

**Winawer Variation:** 3...Bb4 This variation, named after **Szymon Winawer** and pioneered by Nimzowitsch and Botvinnik, is one of the main systems in the French, due chiefly to the latter's efforts in the 1940s, becoming the most often seen rejoinder to 3.Nc3, though in the 1980s, the Classical Variation with 3...Nf6 began a revival, and has since become more popular.

3... Bb4 pins the knight on c3, forcing White to resolve the central tension. White normally clarifies the central situation for the moment with 4. e5, gaining space and hoping to show that Black's b4-bishop is misplaced. The main line then is: 4... c5 5. a3 Bxc3+ 6. bxc3, resulting in the diagrammed position:

After 3...Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3

While White has doubled pawns on the queenside, which form the basis for Black's counterplay, they can also help White since they strengthen his centre and give him a semi-open b-file. White has a spatial advantage on the kingside, where Black is even weaker than usual because he has traded off his dark-square bishop. Combined with the bishop pair, this gives White attacking chances, which he must attempt to utilise as the long-term features of this pawn structure favour Black.

In the diagrammed position, Black most frequently plays 6... Ne7 (The main alternative is 6...Qc7, which can simply transpose to main lines after 7.Qg4 Ne7, but Black also has the option of 7.Qg4 f5 or ...f6. 6...Qa5 has recently become a popular alternative). Now White can exploit the absence of Black's dark-square bishop by playing 7. Qg4, giving Black two choices: he may sacrifice his kingside pawns with 7...Qc7 8.Qxg7 Rg8 9.Qxh7 cxd4 but destroy White's centre in return, the so-called "**Poisoned Pawn Variation**"; or he

can play 7...0-0 8.Bd3 Nbc6, which avoids giving up material, but leaves the king on the flank where White is trying to attack. Experts on the 7.Qg4 line include **Judit Polgár**.

If the tactical complications of 7.Qg4 are not to White's taste, 7.Nf3 and 7.a4 are good positional alternatives:

7. Nf3 is a natural developing move, and White usually follows it up by developing the king's bishop to d3 or e2 (occasionally to b5) and castling kingside. This is called the Winawer Advance Variation. This line often continues 7... Bd7 8. Bd3 c4 9. Be2 Ba4 10. 0-0 Qa5 11. Bd2 Nbc6 12. Ng5 h6 13. Nh3 0-0-0. Its assessment is unclear, but most likely Black would be considered "comfortable" here.

The purpose behind 7. a4 is threefold: it prepares Bc1–a3, taking advantage of the absence of Black's dark-square bishop. It also prevents Black from playing ...Qa5–a4 or ...Bd7–a4 attacking c2, and if Black plays ...b6 (followed by ...Ba6 to trade off the bad bishop), White may play a5 to attack the b6-pawn.

**Sidelines** 5th move deviations for White include:

- 5.Qg4
- 5.dxc5
- 5.Nf3
- 5.Bd2

4th move deviations for White include:

- 4.exd5 exd5, transposing to a line of the Exchange Variation.
- 4.Ne2 (the **Alekhine Gambit**) 4...dxe4 5.a3 Be7 (5...Bxc3+ is necessary if Black wants to try to hold the pawn) 6.Nxe4 to prevent Black from doubling his pawns.
- 4.Bd3 defending e4.
- 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 dxe4 6.Qg4, another attempt to exploit Black's weakness on g7.
- 4.e5 c5 5.Bd2, again preventing the doubled pawns and making possible 6.Nb5, where the knight may hop into d6 or simply defend d4.
- 4.Bd2 (an old move sometimes played by Nezhmetdinov, notably against **Mikhail Tal**)

Deviations for Black include:

- 4...Ne7 although this move usually transposes to the main line.

- 4...b6 followed by ...Ba6, or 4...Qd7 with the idea of meeting 5.Qg4 with 5...f5. However, theory currently prefers White's chances in both lines.
- Another popular way for Black to deviate is 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Ba5, the **Armenian Variation**, as its theory and practice have been much enriched by players from that country, the most notable of whom is **Rafael Vaganian**. Black maintains the pin on the knight, which White usually tries to break by playing 6.b4 cxb4 7.Qg4 or 7.Nb5 (usually 7.Nb5 bxa3+ 8.c3 Bc7 9.Bxa3 and white has the upper hand).

#### Classical Variation: 3...Nf6 Classical Variation 3...Nf6

This is another major system in the French. White can continue with the following options:

**4.Bg5** White threatens 5.e5, attacking the pinned knight. Black has a number of ways to meet this threat:

- **Burn Variation**, named after **Amos Burn** is the most common reply at the top level: **4... dxe4 5. Nxe4** and usually there now follows: **5... Be7 6. Bxf6 Bxf6 7. Nf3 Nd7** or **7... 0-0**, resulting in a position resembling those arising from the Rubinstein Variation. However, here Black has the bishop pair, with greater dynamic chances (although White's knight is well placed on e4), so this line is more popular than the Rubinstein and has long been a favourite of **Evgeny Bareev**. Black can also try **5... Be7 6. Bxf6 gxf6**, as played by **Alexander Morozevich** and **Gregory Kaidanov**; by following up with ...f5 and ...Bf6, Black obtains active piece play in return for his shattered pawn structure. Another line that resembles the Rubinstein is **5... Nbd7 6. Nf3 Be7** (6...h6 is also tried) **7. Nxf6+ Bxf6**.
- **4... Be7 5. e5 Nfd7** used to be the main line and remains important, even though the Burn Variation has overtaken it in popularity. The usual continuation is **6. Bxe7 Qxe7 7. f4 0-0 8. Nf3 c5**, when White has a number of options, including 9.Bd3, 9.Qd2 and 9.dxc5. An alternative for White is the **gambit 6. h4**, which was devised by **Adolf Albin** and played by Chatard, but not taken seriously until the game **Alekhine–Fahrni**, Mannheim 1914. It is known today as the **Albin–Chatard Attack** or the **Alekhine–Chatard Attack**. After **6... Bxg5 7. hxg5 Qxg5 8. Nh3 Qe7 9. Nf4 Nc6 10. Qg4** (the reason for 8.Nh3 rather than 8.Nf3), White has sacrificed a pawn to open the h-file, thereby increasing his attacking chances on the kingside. Black may also decline the

gambit in several ways such **6... a6** and **6... f6**, but most strong players prefer **6... c5**.

- A third choice for Black is to counterattack with the **McCutcheon Variation**. In this variation, the second player ignores White's threat of e4-e5 and instead plays **4... Bb4**. The main line continues: **5. e5 h6 6. Bd2 Bxc3 7. bxc3 Ne4 8. Qg4**. At this point Black may play 8...g6, which weakens the kingside dark squares but keeps the option of castling queenside, or 8...Kf8. The McCutcheon Variation is named for John Lindsay McCutcheon of **Philadelphia** (1857–1905), who brought the variation to public attention when he used it to defeat **World Champion Steinitz** in a **simultaneous exhibition in Manhattan** in 1885.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>

**4.e5 The Steinitz Variation** (named after **Wilhelm Steinitz**) is **4. e5 Nfd7 5. f4** (the most common but White has other options: 5.Nce2, the **Shirov–Anand Variation**), White gets ready to bolster his centre with c2–c3 and f2–f4. Or 5.Nf3 (aiming for piece play) **5... c5 6. Nf3 Nc6 7. Be3** (7.Nce2 transposes to the Shirov–Anand Variation; a trap is 7.Be2 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Ndx5! 9.fxe5 Qh4+ winning a pawn), Black has several options. He may step up pressure on d4 by playing 7...Qb6 or 7...cxd4 8.Nxd4 Qb6, or choose to complete his development, either beginning with the kingside by playing 7...cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5, or with the queenside by playing 7...a6 8.Qd2 b5.

#### Tarrasch Variation: 3.Nd2

After 3.Nd2 Nf6

The **Tarrasch Variation** is named after **Siegbert Tarrasch**. This move became particularly popular during the 1970s and early 1980s when **Anatoly Karpov** used it to great effect. Though less aggressive than the alternate 3.Nc3, it is still used by top-level players seeking a small, safe advantage.

Like 3.Nc3, 3.Nd2 protects e4, but is different in several key respects: it does not block White's c-pawn from advancing, which means he can play c3 at some point to support his d4-pawn. Hence, it avoids the **Winawer Variation** as 3...Bb4 is now readily answered by 4.c3. On the other hand, 3.Nd2 develops the knight to an arguably less active square than 3.Nc3, and in addition, it hems in White's dark-square bishop. Hence, white will typically have to spend an extra tempo moving the knight from d2 at some point before developing said bishop.

- **3... c5 4. exd5** and now Black has two ways to recapture:

- **4... exd5** this was a staple of many old Karpov–Korchnoi battles, including seven games in their 1974 match, usually leads to Black having an isolated queen’s pawn (see *isolated pawn*). The main line continues **5. Ngf3 Nc6 6. Bb5 Bd6 7. 0-0 Nge7 8. dxc5 Bxc5 9. Nb3 Bb6** with a position where, if White can neutralise the activity of Black’s pieces in the middlegame, he will have a slight advantage in the ending. Another possibility for White is **5.Bb5+ Bd7 (5...Nc6 is also possible) 6.Qe2+ Be7 7.dxc5** to trade off the bishops and make it more difficult for Black to regain the pawn.
- **4... Qxd5** is an important alternative for Black; the idea is to trade his c- and d-pawns for White’s d- and e-pawns, leaving Black with an extra centre pawn. This constitutes a slight structural advantage, but in return White gains time for development by harassing Black’s queen. This interplay of static and dynamic advantages is the reason why this line has become popular in the last decade. Play usually continues **5. Ngf3 cxd4 6. Bc4 Qd6 7. 0-0 Nf6** (preventing 8.Ne4) **8. Nb3 Nc6 9. Nbx4 Nxd4**, and here White may stay in the middlegame with 10.Nxd4 or offer the trade of queens with 10.Qxd4, with the former far more commonly played today.
- **3... Nf6** While the objective of 3...c5 was to break open the centre, **3... Nf6** aims to close it. After **4. e5 Nfd7 5. Bd3 c5 6. c3 Nc6** (6...b6 intends ...Ba6 next to get rid of Black’s “bad” light-square bishop, a recurring idea in the French) **7. Ne2** (leaving f3 open for the queen’s knight) **7... cxd4 8. cxd4 f6 9. exf6 Nxf6 10. Nf3 Bd6** Black has freed his pieces at the cost of having a *backward pawn* on e6. White may also choose to preserve his pawn on e5 by playing **4. e5 Nfd7 5. c3 c5 6. f4 Nc6 7. Ndf3**, but his development is slowed as a result, and Black will gain dynamic chances if he can open the position to advantage.
- **3... Nc6** is known as the **Guimard Variation**: after **4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nd7** Black will exchange White’s cramping e-pawn next move by ...f6. However, Black does not exert any pressure on d4 because he cannot play ...c5, so White should maintain a slight advantage, with 6.Be2 or 6 Nb3.
- **3... Be7** is known as the **Morozevich Variation**.<sup>[4]</sup> A fashionable line among top GMs in recent years, this odd-looking move aims to prove that every White move now has its drawbacks, e.g. after **4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nfd7** White cannot play f4, whereas **4.Bd3 c5 5.dxc5 Nf6** and **4.e5 c5 5. Qg4 Kf8!?** lead to obscure complications. **3...h6?!**, with a similar rationale,

has also gained some adventurous followers in recent years, including GM *Alexander Morozevich*.

- Another rare line is **3... a6**, which gained some popularity in the 1970s. Similar to 3...Be7, the idea is to play a waiting move to make White declare his intentions before Black commits to a plan of his own. 3...a6 also controls the b5-square, which is typically useful for Black in most French lines because, for example, White no longer has the option of playing Bb5.

### Exchange Variation: 3.exd5 exd5

After 3.exd5 exd5

Many players who begin with 1.e4 find that the French Defence is the most difficult opening for them to play against due to the closed structure and unique strategies of the system. Thus, many players choose to play the exchange so that the position becomes simple and clearcut. White makes no effort to exploit the advantage of the first move, and has often chosen this line with expectation of an early draw, and indeed draws often occur if neither side breaks the symmetry. An extreme example was *Capablanca–Maróczy, Lake Hopatcong* 1926, which went: **4.Bd3 Bd6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.0-0 0-0 7.Bg5 Bg4 8.Re1 Nbd7 9.Nbd2 c6 10.c3 Qc7 11.Qc2 Rfe8 12.Bh4 Bh5 13.Bg3 Bxg3 14.hxg3 Bg6 15.Rxe8+ Rxe8 16.Bxg6 hxg6 17.Re1 Rxe1+ 18.Nxe1 Ne8 19.Nd3 Nd6 20.Qb3 a6 21.Kf1 ½–½** (the game can be viewed [here](#)).

Despite the symmetrical pawn structure, White cannot force a draw. An obsession with obtaining one sometimes results in embarrassment for White, as in *Tatai–Korchnoi, Beer Sheva* 1978, which continued **4.Bd3 c5!? 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Qe2+ Be7 7.dxc5 Nf6 8.h3 0-0 9.0-0 Bxc5 10.c3 Re8 11.Qc2 Qd6 12.Nbd2 Qg3 13.Bf5 Re2 14.Nd4 Nxd4 0–1** (the game can be watched [here](#)). A less extreme example was *Mikhail Gurevich–Short, Manila* 1990 where White, a strong Russian *grandmaster*, played openly for the draw but was ground down by Short in 42 moves.

To create genuine winning chances, White will often play c2–c4 at some stage to put pressure on Black’s d5-pawn. Black can give White an isolated queen’s pawn by capturing on c4, but this gives White’s pieces greater freedom, which may lead to attacking chances. This occurs in lines such as 3.exd5 exd5 4.c4 (played by GMs *Normunds Miezis* and *Maurice Ashley*) and 4.Nf3 Bd6 5.c4, which may transpose to the *Petroff*. Conversely, if White declines to do this, Black may play ...c7–c5 himself, e.g. **4.Bd3 c5**, as in the above-cited Tatai–Korchnoi game.

If c2–c4 is not played, White and Black have two main piece setups. White may put his pieces on Nf3, Bd3, Bg5

(pinning the black knight), Nc3, Qd2 or the queen's knight can go to d2 instead and White can support the centre with c3 and perhaps play Qb3. Conversely, when the queen's knight is on c3, the king's knight may go to e2 when the enemy bishop and knight can be kept out of the key squares e4 and g4 by f3. When the knight is on c3 in the first and last of the above strategies, White may choose either short or long castling. The positions are so symmetrical that the options and strategies are the same for both sides.

Another way to unbalance the position is for White or Black to castle on opposite sides of the board. An example of this is the line 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Bd6 6.Nf3 Bg4 7.0-0 Nge7 8.Re1 Qd7 9.Nbd2 0-0-0.

#### Advance Variation: 3.e5

After 3.e5 c5 4. c3 Nc6 5. Nf3

The main line of the Advance Variation continues **3... c5 4. c3 Nc6 5. Nf3** and then we have a branching point:

**5... Qb6**, the idea is to increase the pressure on d4 and eventually undermine the White centre. The queen also attacks the b2-square, so White's dark-square bishop cannot easily defend the d4-pawn without losing the b2-pawn. White's most common replies are 6.a3 and 6.Be2.

6.a3 is currently the most important line in the Advance: it prepares 7.b4, gaining space on the queenside. Black may prevent this with 6...c4 intending to take *en passant* if White plays b4, which creates a closed game where Black fights for control of the b3-square. On the other hand, Black may continue developing with 6...Nh6, intending ...Nf5, which might seem strange as White can double the pawn with Bxh6, but this is actually considered good for Black. Black plays ...Bg7 and ...0-0 and Black's king has adequate defence and White will miss his apparently 'bad' dark-square bishop.

6.Be2 is the other alternative, aiming simply to castle. Once again, a common Black response is 6...Nh6 intending 7...cxd4 8.cxd4 Nf5 attacking d4. White usually responds to this threat with 7.Bxh6 or 7.b3 preparing Bb2.

**5... Bd7** was mentioned by Greco as early as 1620, and was revived and popularised by Viktor Korchnoi in the 1970s. Now a main line, the idea behind the move is that since Black usually plays ...Bd7 sooner or later, he plays it right away and waits for White to show his hand. If White plays 6.a3 in response, modern theory says that Black equalises or is better after 6...f6! The lines are complex, but the main point is that a3 is a wasted move if the black queen is not on b6 and so Black uses the extra tempo to attack the white centre immediately.

**5...Nh6** has recently become a popular alternative

There are alternative strategies to **3... c5** that were tried in the early 20th century such as 3...b6, intending to fianchetto the bad bishop and which can transpose to **Owen's Defence** or 3...Nc6, played by Carlos Guimard, intending to keep the bad bishop on c8 or d7 which is passive and obtains little counterplay. Also, 4...Qb6 5.Nf3 Bd7 intending 6...Bb5 to trade off the "bad" queen's bishop is possible.

### 9.4.4 Early deviations for White

After 1.e4 e6, almost 90 percent of all games continue 2.d4 d5, but White can try other ideas. The most important of these is 2.d3 d5 3.Nd2, with a version of the **King's Indian Attack**. White will likely play Ngf3, g3, Bg2, 0-0, c3 and/or Re1 in some order on the next few moves. Black has several ways to combat this setup: 3...c5 followed by ...Nc6, ...Bd6, ...Nf6 or ...Nge7 and ...0-0 is common, 3...Nf6 4.Ngf3 Nc6 plans ...dxe4 and ...e5 to block in the Bg2, and 3...Nf6 4.Ngf3 b6 makes ...Ba6 possible if White's light-square bishop leaves the a6-f1 diagonal. 2.d3 has been used by many leading players over the years, including GMs Pal Benko, Bobby Fischer and Lev Psakhis.

- 2.f4 is the **Labourdonnais Variation**, named after Louis-Charles Mahé de La Bourdonnais, the 19th-century French master.<sup>[5]</sup>
- 2.Qe2 is the **Chigorin Variation**, which discourages 2...d5 because after 3.exd5 the black pawn is pinned, meaning Black would need to recapture with the queen. Black usually replies 2...c5, after which play can resemble the 2.d3 variation or the Closed Variation of the **Sicilian Defence**.
- 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3 is the **Two Knights Variation**: 3...d4 and 3...Nf6 are good replies for Black.
- 2.c4 (attempting to discourage 2...d5 by Black) is the **Steiner Variation**. But Black can reply 2...d5 anyway, when after 3.cxd5 exd5 4.exd5 Nf6 the only way for White to hold on to his extra pawn on d5 is to play 5.Bb5+. Black gets good compensation in return for the pawn, however.
- 2.Bb5 has occasionally been tried. Notably, Henry Bird defeated Max Fleissig with the variation during the Vienna 1873 chess tournament.<sup>[6]</sup>
- 2.b3 leads to the **Réti Gambit** after 2...d5 3.Bb2 dxe4, but Black can also decline it with 3...Nf6 4.e5 Nd7 with White going for f4 and Qg4 before putting the knight on f3.

There are also a few rare continuations after 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5, including 3.Bd3 (the Schlechter Variation), 3.Be3 (the Alapin Gambit), and 3.c4 (the Diemer-Duhm Gambit, which can also be reached via the Queen's Gambit Declined).

### 9.4.5 Early deviations for Black

Although 2...d5 is the most consistent move after 1.e4 e6 2.d4, Black occasionally plays other moves. Chief among them is 2...c5, the **Franco-Benoni Defence**, so-called because it features the c7–c5 push characteristic of the **Benoni Defence**. White may continue 3.d5, when play can transpose into the Benoni, though White has extra options since c2–c4 is not mandated. 3.Nf3, transposing into a normal **Sicilian Defence**, and 3.c3, transposing into a line of the **Alapin Sicilian** (usually arrived at after 1.e4 c5 2.c3 e6 3.d4) are also common. Play may also lead back to the French; for example, 1.e4 e6 2.d4 c5 3.c3 d5 4.e5 transposes into the **Advance Variation**.

### 9.4.6 History

The French Defence is named after a match played by correspondence between the cities of London and Paris in 1834 (although earlier examples of games with the opening do exist). It was Chamouillet, one of the players of the Paris team, who persuaded the others to adopt this defence.<sup>[7]</sup>

As a reply to 1.e4, the French Defence received relatively little attention in the nineteenth century compared to 1...e5. The first world chess champion Wilhelm Steinitz said “I have never in my life played the French Defence, which is the dullest of all openings”.<sup>[8]</sup> In the early 20th century, Géza Maróczy was perhaps the first world-class player to make it his primary weapon against 1.e4. For a long time, it was the third most popular reply to 1.e4, behind only 1...c5 and 1...e5. However, according to the **Mega Database 2007**, in 2006, 1...e6 was second only to the **Sicilian** in popularity.

Historically important contributors to the theory of the defence include Mikhail Botvinnik, Viktor Korchnoi, Aron Nimzowitsch, Tigran Petrosian, Lev Psakhis, Wolfgang Uhlmann and Rafael Vaganian. More recently, its leading practitioners include Evgeny Bareev, Alexey Dreev, Mikhail Gurevich, Alexander Khalifman, Smbat Lputian, Alexander Morozevich, Teimour Radjabov, Nigel Short, Gata Kamsky, and Yuri Shulman.

The **Exchange Variation** was recommended by Howard Staunton in the 19th century,<sup>[9]</sup> but has been in decline ever since. In the early 1990s Garry Kasparov briefly experimented with it before switching to 3.Nc3. Note that Black's

game is made much easier as his queen's bishop has been liberated. It has the reputation of giving immediate equality to Black, due to the symmetrical pawn structure.

Like the Exchange, the **Advance Variation** was frequently played in the early days of the French Defence. Aron Nimzowitsch believed it to be White's best choice and enriched its theory with many ideas. However, the Advance declined in popularity throughout most of the 20th century until it was revived in the 1980s by GM and prominent opening theoretician Evgeny Sveshnikov, who continues to be a leading expert in this line. In recent years, it has become nearly as popular as 3.Nd2; GM Alexander Grischuk has championed it successfully at the highest levels. It is also a popular choice at the club level due to the availability of a simple, straightforward plan involving attacking chances and extra space.

### 9.4.7 ECO codes

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* includes an alphanumeric classification system for openings that is widely used in chess literature. Codes C00 to C19 are the French Defence, broken up in the following way (all apart from C00 start with the moves 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5):

- C00 – 1.e4 e6 without 2.d4, or 2.d4 without 2...d5 (early deviations)
- C01 – 2.d4 d5 (includes the Exchange Variation, 3.exd5)
- C02 – 3.e5 (Advance Variation)
- C03 – 3.Nd2 (includes 3...Be7; C03–C09 cover the Tarrasch Variation)
- C04 – 3.Nd2 Nc6 (Guimard Variation)
- C05 – 3.Nd2 Nf6
- C06 – 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3
- C07 – 3.Nd2 c5 (includes 4.exd5 Qxd5)
- C08 – 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5
- C09 – 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Ngf3 Nc6
- C10 – 3.Nc3 (includes the Rubinstein Variation, 3...dxe4)
- C11 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 (includes the Steinitz Variation, 4.e5; C11–C14 cover the Classical Variation)
- C12 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 (includes the McCutcheon Variation, 4...Bb4)

- C13 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 dxe4 (Burn Variation)
- C14 – 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7
- C15 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 (C15–C19 cover the Winawer Variation)
- C16 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5
- C17 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5
- C18 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 (includes the Armenian Variation, 5...Ba5)
- C19 – 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Nf3 and 7.a4

### 9.4.8 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 9.4.9 References

- [1] T.D. Harding, *French: MacCutcheon [sic] and Advance Lines*, Batsford, 1979, pp. 12, 56. ISBN 0-7134-2026-X.
- [2] Although many sources refer to John Lindsay McCutcheon and his eponymous variation as “MacCutcheon”, “McCutcheon” is the correct spelling. Jeremy Gaige, *Chess Personalia*, McFarland & Company, 1987, pp. 260, 275. ISBN 0-7864-2353-6; David Hooper and Kenneth Whyld, *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed. 1992), Oxford University Press, p. 240, p. 478 n. 1205. ISBN 0-19-866164-9.
- [3] Steinitz–McCutcheon, New York simul 1885
- [4] <http://chesstempo.com/gamedb/opening/688>
- [5] <http://www.365chess.com/opening.php?m=4&n=209&ms=e4.e6.f4&ns=3.16.209>
- [6] <http://chesstempo.com/gamedb/game/2183872/rnbqkbnr/pppp1ppp/4p3/1B6/4P3/8/PPPP1PPP/RNBQK1NR%20b%20KQkq%20-%201%202>
- [7] Le Palamède edited by St. Amant (1846), p. 20.
- [8] “The Cable Match Between Messrs.Tschigorin and Steinitz”. *The International Chess Magazine* **7.1**. January 1891. p. 27. Retrieved 16 September 2013.
- [9] p369, Howard Staunton, *The Chess-Player’s Handbook*, 1847, H.G.Bohn.

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- Psakhis, Lev (2003). *Advance and Other Anti-French Variations*. Batsford. ISBN 9780713488432.
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- Tzermiadianos, Andreas (2008). *How to Beat the French Defence: The Essential Guide to the Tarrasch*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 9781857445671.
- Vitiugov, Nikita (2010). *The French Defence*. Chess Stars. ISBN 978-954-8782-76-0.
- Moskalenko, Viktor (2010). *The Wonderful Winawer*. New In Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-327-4.

### 9.4.11 External links

- The Anatomy of the French Advance

## 9.5 London System

The **London System** is a chess opening that begins with 1.d4 and 2.Bf4 or 2.Nf3 & 3.Bf4. It is a “system” opening that can be used against virtually any black defense and thus comprises a smaller body of opening theory than many other openings. The London System is one of the “Queen’s Pawn Game”, where White opens with 1.d4 but doesn’t play the Queen’s Gambit. It normally results in a closed game.

Sverre Johnsen and Vlatko Kovačević, in the introduction to their 2005 book *Win with the London System*, state:

Basically the London is a set of solid lines where after 1.d4 White quickly develops his dark-squared bishop to f4 and normally bolsters his centre with [pawns on] c3 and e3 rather than expanding. Although it has the potential for a quick kingside attack, the white forces are generally flexible enough to engage in a battle anywhere on the board. Historically it developed into a system mainly from three variations:

- 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Bf4
- 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bf4.

The corresponding *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* codes are D02, A46, and A48.

If White is going to play the London System, it is now thought to be more accurate to play 2.Bf4 instead of 2.Nf3 and 3.Bf4 for a variety of reasons.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 9.5.1 Description

The line came into fashion in the 1922 London tournament as a way of meeting **hypermodern** setups. The line gives White a **solid** position, and critics of the line refer to it as the “old man’s variation” or the “boring system”.<sup>[2]</sup> Even so, the opening can lead to **sharp** attacks and Vlatko Kovačević and David Bronstein are among the sharp tactical players who have played the London System.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 9.5.2 Early play

#### 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4

This position can also be reached via 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.Bf4. Black usually plays either 3...c5, 3...e6, 3...Bf5, 3...c6, 3...g6, or 3...Nc6.

#### 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Bf4

Black usually plays either 3...b6, 3...c5, or 3...d5, transposing above.

#### 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bf4

Play often goes 3...Bg7 4.e3 d6 5.Be2 0-0 6.0-0. As is usual in the **King’s Indian**, Black can strike in the center with ...c5 or ...e5. After 6...c5 7.c3, Black often plays either 7...b6, 7...Qb6, 7...Nc6, 7...Be6, or 7...cxd4. Black can prepare ...e5 in a number of ways, usually starting with either 6...Nbd7, 6...Nc6, or 6...Nfd7.

### 9.5.3 Example game

Kotov vs. Petrosian, Gagra 1952

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.d4 g6 3.Bf4 Bg7 4.e3 0-0 5.Nbd2 c5 6.c3 cxd4 7.exd4 Nc6 8.h3 d6 9.Nc4 b5 10.Ne3 b4 11.d5 bxc3 12.dxc6 cxb2 13.Rb1 Ne4 14.Bd3 Qa5+ 15.Kf1 Ba6 16.Nc4 Bxc4 17.Bxc4 Nc3 18.Qd2 Qa4 19.Bd3 Nxb1 20.Bxb1 Rfc8 21.g3 Rxc6 22.Kg2 Rac8 23.Bh6 Rc1 24.Bxg7 Rxh1 25.Kxh1 Rc1+ 26.Kg2 Rxb1 27.Qh6 Qd1 28.g4 Qh1+ 29.Kg3 Rg1+ 0-1<sup>[4]</sup>

### 9.5.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 9.5.5 References

- [1] Sverre Johnsen; Vlatko Kovacevic (2005). *Win with the London System*. Gambit. ISBN 1-904600-35-2.
- [2] Donaldson, John. “London System (review of Win With the London System)”. [jeremysilman.com](http://jeremysilman.com). Retrieved 2009-03-21.
- [3] Marsh, Sean. “Colle, Torre, and London System”. Chessbase. Retrieved 2009-03-21.
- [4] Alexander Kotov vs Tigran Vartanovich Petrosian (1952) “Kotov Guard”

### 9.5.6 Further reading

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## 9.6 Richter-Veresov Attack

The **Richter–Veresov Attack** (or **Veresov Opening**) is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 d5
2. Nc3 Nf6
3. Bg5

It is also often reached by transposition, for example 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Bg5 (the most common move order), 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 d5 3.Nc3, or 1.Nc3 Nf6 2.d4 d5 3.Bg5.

The opening was named after the German **International Master** Kurt Richter and later the Soviet master Gavriil Veresov, who played it frequently for over a quarter of a century.

Along with the **Trompowsky Attack**, **Colle System**, **London System**, and **Torre Attack**, the Richter–Veresov Attack is one of the more common branches of the **Queen’s Pawn Game**. The more popular **Ruy Lopez** opening looks like a Richter–Veresov Attack mirrored on the **queenside**, but the dynamics of play are quite different.

The ECO code for the Richter–Veresov Attack is D01.

### 9.6.1 Incremental development

The opening dates back as far as the game **Marshall–Wolf**, Monte Carlo 1902. However, it was **Savielly Tartakower** who played it regularly in the 1920s and even to the end of his life, and featuring it in his victory over **Donner** at Staunton Centenary 1951. Tartakower's interpretation and treatment of the opening generally led to a closed, manoeuvring game.

Kurt Richter was the next player to develop new ideas in the opening, during the 1930s. He mostly found it useful to facilitate his risk-taking style, and he produced some dazzling victories which contributed to a whole chapter of his book of best games. Some theoreticians refer to the opening as the Richter Attack.

It was Gavriil Veresov, however, who greatly strengthened both the theory and practice of the opening from **World War II** to his heyday in the 1950s and 1960s. He is credited with demonstrating that the opening contained more subtlety and depth than was previously considered, often culminating in a central advance or direct assault on the enemy king. As a tool for rapid piece development, it resembled a **king pawn** opening, and requiring fewer pawn moves than standard **queen pawn** fare.

The opening has never been very popular at the top level, though various prominent players have employed it on occasion. In 1959, for example, **David Bronstein** played the Richter Attack against Veresov himself.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 9.6.2 The Veresov today

Moving into the last third of the 20th century, grandmasters of the calibre of **Spassky**, **Tal**, **Smyslov**, **Larsen**, and **Bronstein** all experimented with the Veresov Opening as an occasional surprise weapon. Even **Karpov** employed it with success against **Romanishin** in a Soviet Team Championship. Other, more frequent practitioners have included **Hector Rossetto**, **Lev Alburt**, **Victor Ciocaltea**, **Nikola Padevsky**, and **Tony Miles**.

In more contemporary play, the system has remained popular. Grandmaster **Jonny Hector** has become an adherent of the Veresov and some interest has also been shown by leading GM **Alexander Morozevich**.

After 3.Bg5 (see diagram), Black's most popular choices are **3...Nbd7**, **3...e6**, **3...Bf5**, **3...c6**, and **3...c5**, all potentially leading to different variations. White's plans typically include rapid queenside castling and an early f3 and e4.

After the black reply 3...Bf5, Richter usually continued 4.f3, hoping to build a large pawn centre; Veresov, on the other hand, usually played 4.Bxf6, damaging the black pawn structure. Today, these two lines are known, respec-

tively, as the Richter and Veresov Variations.

### 9.6.3 See also

- [List of chess openings](#)
- [List of chess openings named after people](#)

### 9.6.4 Notes

- [1] "David Bronstein vs Gavriil Veresov (1959)". Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2007-04-24.

### 9.6.5 References

- [Chessgames.com: Richter–Veresov Attack \(D01\)](#)
- *CHESS magazine*, Jimmy Adams, Volume 44 Nos. 805–6, November 1978, pp. 57–62.

### 9.6.6 Further reading

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- **Davies**, Nigel (2003). *The Veresov*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 9781857443356.
- **Cyrus Lakdawala** (2010). *A Ferocious Opening Repertoire*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 9781857446616.

### 9.6.7 External links

- [Richter–Veresov Attack](#)

## 9.7 Benoni Defense

The **Benoni Defense** is an opening characterized by the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 c5
3. d5

Black can then sacrifice a pawn by 3...b5 (the **Benko Gambit**), but if Black does not elect this line then 3...e6 is the most common move (though 3...d6 or 3...g6 are also seen, typically leading to main lines).

### 9.7.1 Etymology

“Ben oni” (בֶּן אֲוִי) is a **Hebrew** term meaning “son of my sorrow” (cf. Genesis 35:18) – the name of an 1825 manuscript about this opening.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 9.7.2 Old Benoni: 1.d4 c5

Old Benoni Defense

The **Old Benoni** starts with 1.d4 c5. The Old Benoni may transpose to the Czech Benoni, but there are a few independent variations. This form has never attracted serious interest in high-level play, though **Alexander Alekhine** defeated **Efim Bogoljubow** with it in one game of their second match, in 1934. The Old Benoni is sometimes called the **Blackburne Defense**, after Englishman **Joseph Henry Blackburne**, the first player known to have used it successfully.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 9.7.3 Czech Benoni: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5

Czech Benoni

In the **Czech Benoni**, also sometimes known as the **Hromádka Benoni**, after **Karel Hromádka**, Black plays 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5. The Czech Benoni is much more solid than the Modern Benoni, but it is also more passive. The **middlegames** arising from this line are characterised by much manoeuvring; in most lines, Black will look to break with b7–b5 or f7–f5 after due preparation, while White may play Nc3–e4–h3–Bd3–Nf3–g4, in order to gain space on the **kingside** and prevent ...f5 by Black.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 9.7.4 Modern Benoni: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6

Main article: **Modern Benoni**  
Modern Benoni

The **Modern Benoni**, 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6, is the most common form of Benoni apart from the Benko Gambit. Black’s intention is to play ...exd5 and create a **queenside pawn majority**, whose advance will be supported by **fianchettoed** bishop on g7. The combination of these two features differentiates Black’s setup from the other Benoni defenses and the **King’s Indian Defense**, although **transpositions** between these openings are common. The Modern Benoni is classified under the **ECO codes** A60–A79.

### Snake Benoni: 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 Bd6

Snake Benoni

The Snake Benoni refers to a variant of the Modern Benoni where the bishop is developed to d6 rather than g7. This opening was invented in 1982 by **Rolf Olav Martens**, who gave it its name because of the sinuous movement of the bishop—in Martens’s original concept, Black follows up with 6...Bc7 and sometimes ...Ba5—and because the **Swedish** word for “snake”, *orm*, was an **anagram** of his initials.<sup>[4]</sup> **Normunds Miezis** has been a regular exponent of this variation.<sup>[5]</sup> Aside from Martens’s plan, 6...0-0 intending ...Re8, ...Bf8 and a potential redevelopment of the bishop to g7, has also been tried.<sup>[5]</sup> White appears to retain the advantage against both setups.<sup>[6]</sup>

### 9.7.5 ECO

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) has many codes for the Benoni Defense.

Old Benoni Defense:

- A43 1.d4 c5
- A44 1.d4 c5 2.d5 e5

Benoni Defense:

- A56 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 (includes Czech Benoni)
- A57–A59 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 (**Benko Gambit**)
- A60 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6
- A61 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.Nf3 g6

Fianchetto Variation:

- A62 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.Nf3 g6 7.g3 Bg7 8.Bg2 0-0
- A63 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.Nf3 g6 7.g3 Bg7 8.Bg2 0-0 9.0-0 Nbd7
- A64 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.Nf3 g6 7.g3 Bg7 8.Bg2 0-0 9.0-0 Nbd7 10.Nd2 a6 11.a4 Re8

Modern Benoni:

- A65 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4
- A66 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.f4

Taimanov Variation:

- A67 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.f4 Bg7 8.Bb5+

Four Pawns Attack:

- A68 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.f4 Bg7 8.Nf3 0-0
- A69 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.f4 Bg7 8.Nf3 0-0 9.Be2 Re8

Classical Benoni:

- A70 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3
- A71 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Bg5
- A72 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0
- A73 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0
- A74 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0 a6
- A75 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0 a6 10.a4 Bg4
- A76 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0 Re8
- A77 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0 Re8 10.Nd2
- A78 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0 Re8 10.Nd2 Na6
- A79 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0-0 9.0-0 Re8 10.Nd2 Na6 11.f3

### 9.7.6 See also

- Franco-Benoni Defence (1.e4 e6 2.d4 c5)

### 9.7.7 Notes

- [1] “Whenever I felt in a sorrowful mood and wanted to take refuge from melancholy, I sat over a chessboard, for one or two hours according to circumstances. Thus this book came into being, and its name, Ben-Oni, ‘Son of Sadness,’ should indicate its origin.” (Aaron Reinganum, *Ben-oni oder die Vertheidigungen die Gambitzüg im Schach* [Son of sorrow, or Gambit Defenses in Chess]. Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 1825)
- [2] Preston Ware vs Joseph Henry Blackburne, 1882 at Chessgames.com
- [3] [http://www.chesscafe.com/shop/1166\\_excerpt.pdf](http://www.chesscafe.com/shop/1166_excerpt.pdf)
- [4] Hall 1999, p. 225.
- [5] Bronznik 2011, p. 210.
- [6] Bronznik 2011, p. 222.

### 9.7.8 References and further reading

- Bronznik, Valeri (2011). *1.d4 - Beat the Guerrillas!*. Alkmaar: New In Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-373-1.
- Franco, Zenon (2007). *Chess Explained: The Modern Benoni*. Gambit. ISBN 978-1-904600-77-0.
- Hall, Jesper (August 1999). “Seek, and thou shalt find!”. In Giddins, Steve. *New In Chess—The First 25 Years*. Alkmaar: New In Chess (published 2009). ISBN 978-90-5691-296-3.
- Komarov, Dmitry; Djuric, Stefan; Pantaleoni, Claudio (2009). *Chess Opening Essentials, Vol. 3: Indian Defences*. New In Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-270-3.
- Norwood, David (1995). *The Modern Benoni*. Cado-gan. ISBN 91-976005-2-0.
- Psakhis, Lev (2003). *The Complete Benoni*. Sterling Pub. ISBN 0-7134-7765-2.
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## 9.8 Benko Gambit

The **Benko Gambit** (or **Volga Gambit**) is a chess opening characterised by the move 3...b5 in the **Benoni Defense** arising after:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 c5
3. d5 b5

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) has three codes for the Benko Gambit:<sup>[1]</sup>

- A57 3...b5
- A58 3...b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6
- A59 3...b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 Bxa6 6.Nc3 d6 7.e4

### 9.8.1 Origin and predecessors

The idea of sacrificing a pawn with ...b5 and ...a6 is quite old. Karel Opočenský applied the idea against, among others, Gideon Ståhlberg at Poděbrady 1936, Paul Keres at Pärnu 1937, and Erich Eliskases at Prague 1937. Later the Mark Taimanov versus David Bronstein game at the Candidates Tournament, Zürich 1953, drew attention. Most of these games began as a King's Indian, with Black only later playing ...c5 and ...b5. Possibly the first to use the now-standard move order 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 was Thorvaldsson–Vaitonis, Munich Olympiad 1936.

In many countries, particularly in the Eastern Bloc, the opening is known as the **Volga Gambit**. This name is derived from the Volga River after an article about 3...b5!? by B. Argunow written in Kuibyshev (Samara since 1991), Russia, that was published in the second 1946 issue of the magazine *Shakhmaty v SSSR*.

Beginning in the late 1960s, this opening idea was also promoted by Pal Benko, a Hungarian-American Grandmaster, who provided many new suggestions and published his book *The Benko Gambit* in 1974. The name *Benko Gambit* stuck and is particularly used in English-speaking countries.

In his 1974 book, Benko drew a distinction between the *Benko Gambit* and the *Volga Gambit*: “Volga Gambit” referred to the move 3...b5 (sometimes followed by an early ...e6), while the “Benko Gambit” consisted of the moves 3...b5 4.cxb5 a6, which is now considered the main line.<sup>[2]</sup> Now the terms are synonyms and are used interchangeably or joined together with a hyphen (Volga–Benko Gambit).<sup>[3]</sup>

### 9.8.2 Theory

The main line continues with the moves **4. cxb5 a6 5. bxa6 Bxa6** followed by Black fianchettoing the f8-bishop. (Black players leery of the double-fianchetto system, where White plays g3 and b3, and fianchettoes both bishops, have preferred 5...g6 intending 6.b3 Bg7 7.Bb2 Nxa6! The point is that it is awkward for White to meet the threat of ...Nb4, hitting d5 and a2, when Nc3 may often be met by ...Nfxd5 because of the latent pin down the long diagonal.) Black's compensation for the pawn takes several forms. First, White, who is already behind in development, must solve

the problem of developing the f1-bishop. After **6. Nc3 d6**, if White plays 7.e4, then Black will play 7...Bxf1, and after recapturing with the king, White will have to spend time **castling artificially** with g3 and Kg2, as in the line 7...Bxf1 8.Kxf1 g6 9.g3 Bg7 10.Kg2. If White avoids this by fianchettoing the bishop, it will be in a rather passive position, being blocked by White's own pawn on d5.

Apart from this, Black also obtains fast development and good control of the a1–h8 diagonal and can exert pressure down the half-open a- and b-files. These are benefits which can last well into the **endgame** and so, unusual for a **gambit**, Black does not generally mind if queens are exchanged; indeed, exchanging queens can often remove the sting from a **kingside** attack by White.

Although the main line of the Benko is considered acceptable for White, there are various alternatives which avoid some of the problems entailed in the main line. The simplest is to just decline the gambit with 4.Nf3. Other possible moves are 4.Nd2, 4.a4, and 4.Qc2. Another idea, popular at the grandmaster level as of 2004, is to accept the pawn but then immediately return it with 4.cxb5 a6 5.b6. Another popular alternative is 5.e3.

### 9.8.3 Use

The gambit's most notable practitioner has been its eponym, Pal Benko. Many of the world's strongest players have used it at one time or another, including former **world champions** Viswanathan Anand, Garry Kasparov, Veselin Topalov and Mikhail Tal, and Grandmasters Vassily Ivanchuk, Michael Adams, Alexei Shirov, Boris Gelfand, and Evgeny Bareev.

### 9.8.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 9.8.5 References

- [1] Chess Archaeology: Openings classified under ECO A57–A59
- [2] Benko, Pal (1974). *The Benko Gambit*. B. T. Batsford, London. ISBN 0-7134-1058-2.
- [3] Konikowski, Jerry (November 2002). “A weapon against the Volga Gambit”. *ChessBase Magazine* (ChessBase GmbH) (98).

### 9.8.6 Further reading

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- McDonald, Neil (2004). *Benko Gambit Revealed*. Batsford. ISBN 978-0-7134-8868-5.
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## 9.9 Blumenfeld Gambit

The **Blumenfeld Gambit** is a chess opening characterised by the moves 3...e6 4.Nf3 b5 in the **Benoni Defence** arising after:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 c5
3. d5 e6
4. Nf3 b5

or alternatively:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nf3 c5
4. d5 b5

In fact, as many as 30 different move orders are possible.<sup>[1]</sup> The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) sorts the Blumenfeld Gambit under code E10 (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3).

### 9.9.1 General considerations

Black sacrifices a wing pawn to establish an imposing centre with pawns on c5, d5 and e6. The natural development of the bishops to b7 and d6, combined with the open f-file for a rook, tend to facilitate Black's play on the kingside. White, on the other hand, will typically look to counter in the centre by playing e4 at some point, while his additional queenside pawn also offers him some initiative on that side of the board.

### 9.9.2 Origin

The opening is named after the Russian master Benjamin Blumenfeld, and was later played by World Chess Champion Alexander Alekhine.

The opening position can also be reached via the Benko Gambit (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.Nf3 e6). Possible continuations are 5.dxe6 (Kan-Goldenov, 1946), 5.Bg5 (Vaganian-K. Grigorian, 1971), 5.e4, or 5.a4 (Rubinstein-Spielmann, 1922),<sup>[2]</sup> with 5.Bg5 being most frequently seen when this gambit is employed.

### 9.9.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 9.9.4 References

- [1] Opening Report: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.d5 b5 (1914 games)
- [2] Kasparov, Gary; Raymond Keene (1982). *Batsford Chess Openings*. B. T. Batsford, London. ISBN 0-7134-2114-2.

### 9.9.5 Further reading

- Przewoznik, Jan; Pein, Malcolm (1991). *The Blumenfeld Gambit*. Pergamon Chess. ISBN 0-08-037132-9.

### 9.9.6 External links

- Blumenfeld Gambit - Yearbook Surveys - New In Chess

## 9.10 English Defence

The **English Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. d4 e6
2. c4 b6

### 9.10.1 Description

White often gains a broad pawn centre with 3.e4, which Black puts pressure on with moves like ...Bb7, ...Bb4, and sometimes even ...Qh4 and/or ...f5. It was developed by the

Leicester player P. N. Wallis, and was taken up by several leading English players in the 1970s, such as **Tony Miles**, **Jon Speelman** and **Raymond Keene**.<sup>[1]</sup> It flouts several traditional opening principles, as Black often develops bishops before knights and brings out the queen early.<sup>[1]</sup> It is a somewhat unusual opening, but has been seen in high-level grandmaster play, usually as a surprise weapon, for example when **Viktor Korchnoi** used it to defeat **Lev Polugaevsky** in their world championship semifinals match at **Évian** 1977 (see below).

### 9.10.2 Illustrative games

- **Polugaevsky–Korchnoi, Évian 1977**:<sup>[2]</sup>  
1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 3.e4 Bb7 4.Qc2 Qh4 5.Nd2 Bb4 6.Bd3 f5 7.Nf3 Bxd2+ 8.Kf1 Qh5 9.Bxd2 Nf6 10.exf5 Bxf3 11.gxf3 Nc6 12.Bc3 0-0 13.Re1 Qh3+ 14.Ke2 Rae8 15.Kd1 e5 16.dxe5 Nxe5 17.Be2 Nxf3 18.Qd3 Rxe2 19.Rxe2 Qg2 20.Rhe1 Nxe1 21.Kxe1 Qxh2 22.Re7 Qg1+ 23.Ke2 Qg4+ 24.Ke1 h5 25.Qg3 Qxg3 26.fxg3 Rf7 27.Bxf6 gxf6 28.Re8+ Kg7 29.Kf2 Kh6 30.b4 Kg5 31.Ra8 Kxf5 32.Rxa7 d6 33.a4 Ke6 34.a5 bxa5 35.Rxa5 f5 36.c5 Rh7 37.cxd6 cxd6 38.b5 h4 39.gxh4 Rxh4 40.Ra8 Rb4 41.Rb8 Kd5 42.Kf3 Rb3+ 43.Kf4 Kc5 44.Rc8+ Kxb5 45.Kxf5 Re3 46.Kf4 Re1 47.Rd8 Kc5 48.Rc8+ Kd4 49.Kf3 d5 50.Kf2 Re5 51.Ra8 Kc3 52.Ra3+ Kb4 53.Ra1 d4 54.Rc1 d3 55.Rc8 d2 56.Rb8+ Kc3 57.Rc8+ Kd3 58.Rd8+ Kc2 59.Rc8+ Kd1 60.Rc7 Rf5+ 61.Kg2 Ke2 62.Re7+ Kd3 63.Rd7+ Ke3 64.Re7+ Kd4 65.Rd7+ Rd5 0–1
- **Susan Polgar–Speelman, Netherlands 1993**:<sup>[3]</sup>  
1.d4 e6 2.c4 Bb4+ 3.Nc3 b6 4.e4 Bb7 5.d5 Qe7 6.Be2 Nf6 7.f3 exd5 8.cxd5 c6 9.dxc6 Nxc6 10.Nh3 d5 11.exd5 0-0-0 12.Bg5 Rhe8 13.Bxf6 gxf6 14.Nf4 Qe5 15.Qd2 Bxc3 16.bxc3 Nb4 17.Kf2 Nxd5 18.Nd3 Nxc3 0–1
- **Lucian Filip-Igor Kovalenko, Iasi, Romania 2014**:<sup>[4]</sup>  
1. d4 e6 2. c4 b6 3. g3 Bb7 4. Nf3 Bb4+ 5. Bd2 Bxf3 6. exf3 Bxd2+ 7. Qxd2 d5 8. cxd5 Qxd5 9. Nc3 Qxf3 10. Rg1 Qh5 11. Nb5 Na6 12. Qc2 Ne7 13. Qa4 O-O 14. Qxa6 Qxh2 15. Rg2 Qh6 16. Qa3 Nf5 17. g4 Nh4 18. Rg3 c6 19. g5 Qg6 20. Bd3 Nf5 21. Nd6 Qh5 22. Bxf5 Qh1+ 23. Ke2 Qxa1 24. Bc2 Qc1 25. Qd3 g6 26. Ne4 Rad8 27. Rh3 Kg7 28. Rxh7+ 1-0

### 9.10.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 9.10.4 Notes

- [1] Lawton, Geoff (2003). *Tony Miles: It's Only Me*. Batsford. p. 281. ISBN 0-7134-8809-3.
- [2] Lev Polugaevsky vs. Viktor Korchnoi, Évian 1977
- [3] Susan Polgar vs. Jonathan Speelman, Netherlands 1993
- [4] <http://www.365chess.com/game.php?gid=3894764>

### 9.10.5 References

- Plaskett, James. *Foxy Openings Volume 22: English Defence* (DVD).
- Monokroussos, Dennis. "English Defence: be the victor, not the victim!". Chessbase.com. Retrieved 2006-11-17.

## 9.11 Keres Defence

The **Keres Defence** (also known as the **Kangaroo Defence** or **Franco-Indian Defense**) is a chess opening characterised by the moves:

1. d4 e6
2. c4 Bb4+

The opening is named for Estonian grandmaster Paul Keres.

### 9.11.1 History

This opening was known since the 1840s and was played by **Henry Thomas Buckle** in his fourth match game with **Johann Löwenthal**, London 1851.<sup>[1][2]</sup> The standard reply today, 3.Bd2, was recommended by **Howard Staunton**.

### 9.11.2 Discussion

White can respond 3.Nc3, 3.Nd2, or 3.Bd2. The game often transposes to a **Nimzo-Indian Defence**, a **Dutch Defence**, a **Queen's Gambit Declined**, an **English Defence**, or a **Bogo-Indian Defence**. 3.Nc3 is likely to transpose into one of those openings: 3...Nf6 (Nimzo-Indian), 3...f5 (Dutch; Korn gives 3...Bxc3+ 4.bxc3 f5!,<sup>[3]</sup> played by Buckle) 3...d5 (an unusual form of QGD), or 3...b6 (English). Black has the same options after 3.Nd2, except that 3...Nf6 4.Nf3 is a Bogo-Indian.

After 3.Bd2, Black can continue with 3...Bxd2+ into a line of the Bogo-Indian, and 3...a5 will also usually transpose

to a Bogo-Indian when White plays Nf3. Or Black can allow White to play e4: 3...Qe7 4.e4 d5 (Black obtained a good game in Llanos–Hoffman, San Luis Clarin 1995 with 4...Nf6 5.a3 Bxd2+ 6.Nxd2 d6 7.Bd3 e5 8.d5 0-0)<sup>[4]</sup> 5.Bxb4 (5.e5 Timman–Spraggett, Montpellier 1985)<sup>[5][6]</sup> Qxb4+ 6.Qd2! Qxd2+ (if 6...Nc6 then 7.Nc3!) 7.Nxd2 with slight advantage for White.<sup>[7]</sup>

### 9.11.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 9.11.4 References

#### Notes

- [1] Hooper, Whyld (1987)
- [2] Löwenthal vs. Buckle, London 1851 Chessgames.com
- [3] Korn, Walter (1982). “Queen’s Pawn Games”. *Modern Chess Openings* (12th ed.). David McKay Company, Inc. p. 312. ISBN 0-679-13500-6.
- [4] Schiller (1998), p. 227
- [5] Timman vs. Spraggett, Montpellier 1985 Chessgames.com
- [6] Matanović 1996 (Vol A), p. 295, note 73
- [7] Kasparov, Gary; Keene, Raymond (1982). *Batsford Chess Openings*. American Chess Promotions. p. 47. ISBN 0-17134-2112-6.

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- Matanović, Aleksandar, ed. (1996). *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*. Vol A (2nd ed.). Yugoslavia: Chess Informant.

### 9.11.5 External links

- Chess Opening Explorer Chessgames.com

## 9.12 Dutch Defence

The **Dutch Defence** is a **chess opening** characterised by the moves:

1. d4 f5

### 9.12.1 History

Elias Stein (1748–1812), an **Alsatian** who settled in The Hague, recommended the defence as the best reply to 1.d4 in his 1789 book *Nouvel essai sur le jeu des échecs, avec des réflexions militaires relatives à ce jeu*.

Siegbert Tarrasch rejected the opening as unsound in his 1931 work *The Game of Chess*, arguing that White should reply with the **Staunton Gambit**, with White being better after 2.e4 fxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 c6 5.f3! exf3.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 9.12.2 Theory

Black’s **1... f5** stakes a serious claim to the e4 square and looks towards an attack on White’s **kingside** in the **middlegame**. However, it weakens Black’s own **kingside** somewhat, and does nothing to contribute to Black’s development. The Dutch is rare in top-level play. It has never been one of the main lines against 1.d4, though in the past a number of top players, including **Alexander Alekhine**, **Bent Larsen**, **Paul Morphy** and **Miguel Najdorf**, have used it with success. Perhaps its high-water mark occurred in 1951, when both world champion **Mikhail Botvinnik** and his challenger, **David Bronstein**, played it in their **World Championship match** in 1951. Among the world’s current top 10 players, its only consistent practitioner is **Hikaru Nakamura**.

White most often **fianchettoes** his king’s bishop with g3 and Bg2. Black also sometimes fianchettoes his king’s bishop with ...g6 and ...Bg7 (the **Leningrad Dutch**), but may instead develop his bishop to Be7, d6 (after ...d5), or b4 (the latter is most often seen if White plays c4 before castling). Play often runs 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 e6 4.Nf3 (4.Nh3!? is also possible, intending Nf4–d3 to control the e5 square if Black plays the **Stonewall Variation**) Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 and now Black chooses between 6...d5 (the characteristic move of the Stonewall), 6...d6, the **Ilyin–Zhenovsky System** (less popular today), or Alekhine’s move 6...Ne4!? retaining the option of moving the d-pawn either one or two squares.

The Stonewall Dutch enjoyed a resurgence of interest in the 1980s and 1990s, when leading grandmasters **Artur Yusupov**, **Sergey Dolmatov**, **Nigel Short** and **Simen Agdestein** helped develop the system where Black plays an earlier ...d5 and places his dark-squared bishop on d6.<sup>[2]</sup>

Termed the **Modern Stonewall**, this setup has remained more popular than the traditional early ...Be7.

The opening's attacking potential is shown in the **Polish Immortal**, in which **Miguel Najdorf**, using the Stonewall Variation, sacrificed all of his minor pieces to win by **checkmate**.

### 9.12.3 White continuations

2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d6

The traditional move order involves White playing 2.c4. More commonly, White will start with 2.g3. Some common continuations are: c4 is played after g3 and Bg2; c4 is played after Nf3; and c4 is played after 0-0.

Examples:

- traditional: 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d6
- common: 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d6 (diagram)

#### Other second moves

White has various more aggressive alternatives to the standard moves, including

- 2.Nc3 Nf6 (or d5) 3.Bg5;
- 2.Bg5 (hoping for the naive 2...h6 3.Bh4 g5 4.Bg3 (4.e4!? is also playable) f4? 5.e3 fxg3?? 6.Qh5#);
- 2.e4!?, the **Staunton Gambit**, named after **Howard Staunton**, who introduced it in his match against **Bernhard Horwitz**.<sup>[3][4]</sup> The Staunton Gambit was once a feared attacking line,<sup>[5]</sup> but it has been out of favor for over 80 years.<sup>[6]</sup> **Grandmaster Larry Christiansen** and **International Master Jeremy Silman** have opined that it “offers White equality at best.”<sup>[7]</sup>
- **Carl Mayet** introduced a completely different gambit approach to the Dutch in 1839 against **von der Lasa**, playing 2.h3 followed by 3.g4.<sup>[8]</sup> Von der Lasa later published analysis of this line in the first edition of the *Handbuch des Schachspiels*.<sup>[9][10]</sup> **Viktor Korchnoi**, one of the world's leading players, reintroduced the line into tournament practice in Korchnoi–Känel, Biel 1979.<sup>[11]</sup> GM Christiansen later concluded, as von der Lasa and Staunton had done over 140 years earlier, that Black could get a good game by declining the gambit with 2...Nf6 3.g4 d5!<sup>[12]</sup>

Black sometimes starts with the move-order 1...e6 to avoid these lines although then Black must be ready to play the **French Defense** if White plays 2.e4 and Black can no longer play the Leningrad Dutch.

### 9.12.4 ECO

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) has twenty codes for the Dutch Defence, A80 through A99.

- A80: 1.d4 f5
- A81: 1.d4 f5 2.g3
- A82: 1.d4 f5 2.e4 (**Staunton Gambit**)
- A83: 1.d4 f5 2.e4 fxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 (**Staunton Gambit**)
- A84: 1.d4 f5 2.c4
- A85: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 (**Rubinstein Variation**)
- A86: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3
- A87: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nf3 (**Leningrad Dutch**)
- A88: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.Nc3 c6 (**Leningrad Dutch**)
- A89: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.Nc3 Nc6 (**Leningrad Dutch**)
- A90: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2
- A91: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7
- A92: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0
- A93: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.b3 (**Botvinnik Variation**)
- A94: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.b3 c6 8.Ba3 (**Stonewall**)
- A95: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.Nc3 c6 (**Stonewall**)
- A96: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d6
- A97: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.Nc3 Qe8 (**Ilyin–Genevsky Variation**)
- A98: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.Nc3 Qe8 8.Qc2 (**Ilyin–Genevsky Variation**)
- A99: 1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.Nc3 Qe8 8.b3 (**Ilyin–Genevsky Variation**)

### 9.12.5 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places
- Stonewall Attack

### 9.12.6 References

- [1] Tarrasch, Siegbert (1987) [1934]. *The Game of Chess*. Courier Dover Publications. p. 348. ISBN 978-0-486-25447-0.
- [2] Johnsen, Sverre and Bern, Ivar (2010). *Win with the Stonewall Dutch*. Gambit. p. 6. ISBN 1-906454-07-8.
- [3] “Howard Staunton vs Bernard Horwitz, 3rd match game, London 1846”. Retrieved 2008-07-01.
- [4] Hooper, D.; Whyld, K. (1992). *The Oxford Companion to Chess, 2nd edition*. Oxford University Press. p. 393. ISBN 0-19-866164-9.
- [5] In 1939, Fine wrote that, “The Staunton Gambit ... offers White considerable attacking chances.” Fine, R.; Griffith, R.C.; White, J.H. (1939). *Modern Chess Openings, 6th edition*. David McKay. p. 176. In 1964, Horowitz wrote that the Staunton Gambit gives White “sharp attacking chances for his Pawn” and places the opponent at a psychological disadvantage by requiring Black to renounce his aggressive intentions and “resign himself to an accurate and stubborn defense”. Horowitz, I.A. (1964). *Chess Openings: Theory and Practice*. Simon and Schuster. p. 611. More recent writers have observed that fear of the Staunton Gambit has discouraged many players from using the Dutch. Yet many have used it anyway Christiansen, L.; Silman, J. (1989). *The Dutch Defense*. Chess Digest. p. 192. ISBN 0-87568-178-6.; Schiller, E.; Bill Colias (1993). *How to Play Black Against the Staunton Gambit*. Chess Digest. p. 4. ISBN 0-87568-236-7.
- [6] In 1925, the editors of the Fourth Edition of *Modern Chess Openings* (MCO-4) wrote that the Staunton Gambit “has fallen out of favour for no clear reason”. Griffith, R.C.; White, J.H. and M.E. Goldstein (1925). *Modern Chess Openings, 4th edition*. Whitehead & Miller. p. 120. In 1939, Fine wrote in MCO-6, “The Staunton Gambit fell out of favour some time ago and still remains so ... .” Fine, R.; Griffith, R.C.; White, J.H. (1939). *Modern Chess Openings, 6th edition*. David McKay. p. 176. Grandmaster Nick de Firmian writes in MCO-15 (2008) that the Staunton Gambit “is not in much favor today”. de Firmian, N. (2008). *Modern Chess Openings, 15th edition*. Random House. p. 494. ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7.
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- [9] Bilguer, P. (1843). *Handbuch des Schachspiels*. Verlag von Veit & Co, Berlin. pp. 234–235, section 3, rows 4–6.
- [10] Alan L. Watson (1995). *The Anti-Dutch Spike: g4! in the Krejci, Korchnoi, and Alapin Variations*. Blackmar Press. p. 36. ISBN 0-9619606-2-0.
- [11] Korchnoi–Känel, Biel 1979
- [12] Christiansen, L.; Silman, J. (1989). *The Dutch Defense*. Chess Digest. p. 144. ISBN 0-87568-178-6.

### 9.12.7 Further reading

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- Aagaard, Jacob (2001). *Dutch Stonewall*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 9781857442526.
- Pinski, Jan (2002). *Classical Dutch*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-85744-307-1.
- Williams, Simon (2003). *Play The Classical Dutch*. Gambit Publications. ISBN 978-1-901983-88-3.
- McDonald, Neil (2004). *Starting out: The Dutch Defence*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 1-857443-77-2.
- Johnsen, Sverre; Bern, Ivar; Agdestein, Simen (2009). *Win With the Stonewall Dutch*. Gambit. ISBN 1-906454-07-8.
- Williams, Simon; Palliser, Richard; Vigus, James (2010). *Dangerous Weapons: The Dutch*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-624-1.

### 9.12.8 External links

- Learning the Dutch Defense
- Nouvel essai sur le jeu des échecs 1789 (Google Books)

## 9.13 Staunton Gambit

The **Staunton Gambit** is a chess opening characterized by the moves:

1. d4 f5 (the Dutch Defence)
2. e4!?

White sacrifices a pawn for quick development, hoping to launch an attack against Black's kingside, which has been somewhat weakened by 1...f5.

Black can decline the gambit with 2...d6, transposing to the **Balogh Defence**; or 2...e6, transposing to the **Franco-Hiva**. But accepting the pawn with 2...fxe4 is considered stronger than transposing to either of those offbeat defenses.

Although the Staunton Gambit was once a feared weapon for White, it is rarely played today, since theory has shown how to neutralize it, and White scores only about 50 percent.

The ECO codes for Staunton Gambit are A82 and A83.

### 9.13.1 Gambit accepted

After 2...fxe4, play usually proceeds **3.Nc3 Nf6**.

#### Main line: 4.Bg5

The main line runs 4.Bg5, first played by **Howard Staunton** against **Bernhard Horwitz** in London, 1846.<sup>[1]</sup>

After 4.Bg5, a common trap is 4...d5? 5.Bxf6 exf6 6.Qh5+ g6 7.Qxd5 Qxd5 8.Nxd5 when White has regained his pawn, and since his knight is attacking the pawns on both c7 and f6, will come out a pawn ahead. Instead, Black usually tries to develop quickly and fortify his kingside, giving back the pawn if necessary, with 4...Nc6 5.d5 (White can regain the pawn with 5.Bxf6 exf6 6.Nxe4, but after 6...Qe7, white has no good way to defend the knight. Everything except for 7.Qe2 allows d5 or f5, winning a piece, while after the forcing 7.Qe2 Nxd4 8.Qd3 d5 9.Qxd4 Qxe4+ 10.Qxe4 dxe4, Black has an extra pawn and the two bishops for no compensation, and should win with best play.) 5...Ne5 6.Qd4 Nf7, while 6.Qe2 is a modern alternative.

#### 4.f3

White can also try 4.f3 in the style of the **Blackmar-Diemer Gambit**, whereupon White gets good compensation after 4...exf3. So Black generally plays 4...d5! 5.fxe4 dxe4. Black can also try 4...e3, returning the pawn in order to hinder White's development.

#### 4.g4?!

4.g4?! (the **Bayonet Attack** or **Tartakower Variation**) fails to provide enough compensation after 4...h6!.

### 9.13.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 9.13.3 Notes

[1] <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1001250>

### 9.13.4 External links

- The Staunton Gambit 1.d4 f5 2.e4
- Opening Report: 1.d4 f5 2.e4 (3566 games)
- Campbell Report, Mark Morss, Staunton Gambit

## 9.14 Queen's Knight Defense

The **Queen's Knight Defense** (also known as the **Nimzowitsch Queen Pawn Defence** or **Bogoljubow–Mikenas Defence**) is a chess opening defined by the moves:

1. d4 Nc6

Unless the game transposes to another opening, the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* code for the Queen's Knight Defense is A40.

### 9.14.1 Discussion

This opening was tried by some hypermodern players such as **Aron Nimzowitsch** and **Efim Bogoljubov**, but it has never become very popular. The move 1...Nc6 is a fairly committal move which blocks Black's c-pawn; usually Black delays playing it until White's setup is clear.

Most games featuring 1.d4 Nc6 transpose to another opening. After 2.e4 the **Nimzowitsch Defence** arises. After 2.Nf3 d5 a variation of the **Queen's Pawn Game** is possible. After 2.c4 d5 the opening is a **Chigorin Defence**.

There are some lines which are unique to 1.d4 Nc6, most importantly 2.d5 which chases the knight away, usually to e5. The opening resembles an **Alekhine's Defence** but on the opposite side of the board. In an opening book by Sid Pickard, this variation was called the **Bozo–Indian Defence** – “Bozo” being a combination of the prefixes “Nimzo” and “Bogo”.

The Queen's Knight Defense was featured (although not mentioned by name) in the season four episode of *Chuck* entitled “Chuck Versus the Family Volkoff”.

### 9.14.2 Variations

- 2.d5 Nb8 (Montevideo Retreat)
- 2.c4 e5 3.d5 Nd4 (Cannstatter Gambit)
- 2.c4 e5 3.d5 Nce7 (Lithuanian Variation)

### 9.14.3 Illustrative game

Erich Weinitschke vs Efim Bogoljubov, Bad Elster (Germany) 1938.<sup>[1]</sup>

1. d4 Nc6 2. d5 Ne5 3. f4 Ng6 4. e4 e5 (this position more commonly occurs from the *Nimzowitsch Defense* by 1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 e5 3.d5 Nce7 4.f4 Ng6) 5. f5 Qh4+ 6. Kd2 Qxe4 7. fxg6 Qxd5+ 8. Ke1 Qxd1+ 9. Kxd1 hxg6 10. Nc3 c6 11. Nf3 f6 12. Bd3 Ne7 13. Re1 d5 14. h3 e4 15. Bxe4 dxe4 16. Nxe4 Kf7 17. Bd2 Nf5 18. b3 g5 19. Ke2 Nd6 20. Nf2 Bf5 21. Nd4 Bg6 22. Kf1 Nf5 23. Ne2 Bc5 24. Ne4 Bb6 25. c4 Rad8 26. Red1 Rxd2 27. Nxd2 Ne3+ 0–1

### 9.14.4 Notes

- [1] Erich Weinitschke vs Efim Bogoljubov game at ChessGames.com

### 9.14.5 References

- David Hooper and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.). Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Eric Schiller (1997). *Unorthodox Chess Openings*. Cardoza. ISBN 0-940685-73-6.

## 9.15 Englund Gambit

The **Englund Gambit** is a rarely played chess opening that starts with the moves:

1. d4 e5?!

Black's idea is to avoid the traditional closed queen's pawn games and create an open game with tactical chances, but at the cost of a pawn. The gambit is considered weak; Boris Avrukh writes that 1...e5 "seems to me the worst possible reply to White's first move".<sup>[1]</sup> It is almost never seen in top-level play, although Paul Keres once tried it.<sup>[2]</sup> The gambit is occasionally seen in amateur games and in correspondence chess, and the 3...Qe7 version of the gambit was frequently used by Henri Grob.<sup>[3]</sup>

Black has numerous ways to continue after 1.d4 e5 2.dxe5. Black can offer to **exchange** the d-pawn for White's e-pawn with 2...d6, arguing that after White captures with exd6, ...Bxd6 will offer Black a lead in development to compensate for the pawn. After the continuation 2...Nc6 3.Nf3, Black may round up the e5-pawn with 3...Qe7, intending to meet 4.Bf4 with the disruptive 4...Qb4+, and ensuring that White's only way to maintain the extra pawn is to expose the queen with 4.Qd5, but in subsequent play the queen can prove to be awkwardly placed on e7. 3...Nge7 intending 4...Ng6 is another way to round up the e5-pawn, but requires two tempi, while Black can also offer to exchange the f-pawn with 3...f6, or 3...Bc5 intending a subsequent...f6, with similar play to the **Blackmar–Diemer Gambit** except that Black has one tempo less.

The gambit can be considered an inferior relative of the **Budapest Gambit** and **Albin Countergambit**, as by comparison with those gambits, White has not weakened the b4-square with c2–c4, and may be able to put that tempo to better use in order to avoid giving away any key squares.<sup>[4]</sup> Accordingly, with careful play White should be able to obtain a greater advantage against the Englund than against the Budapest and Albin, against all approaches by Black. However, since the Budapest and Albin rely upon White continuing with 2.c4, and can thus be avoided by continuations such as 2.Nf3 (when 2...e5? can be met by 3.Nxe5 in either case), it is easier for exponents of the Englund Gambit to get their opening on the board and avoid getting into a typical queen's pawn type of game.

### 9.15.1 History

1.d4 e5 is also known as the **Charlick Gambit** after Henry Charlick (1845–1916), the second Australian chess champion, who introduced the 2...d6 line in the early 1890s.<sup>[5]</sup> The main line Englund Gambit (2...Nc6, 3...Qe7) was introduced by Kārlis Bētiņš (1867–1943), who also established the **Latvian Gambit**. The Swedish player Fritz Carl Anton Englund (1871–1933) sponsored a thematic tournament in which all games had to begin with the position after 4.Qd5; the 1.d4 e5 gambit complex was later named after him.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 9.15.2 Main variations

#### Blackburne–Hartlaub Gambit

The **Blackburne–Hartlaub Gambit**, 2...d6, was Charlick's original idea to avoid the closed openings, aiming for compensation for a pawn after 3.exd6 Bxd6.<sup>[5]</sup> A sample continuation is 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.Bg5 h6 6.Bh4, when White remains a pawn up with some advantage. White can also delay the immediate 3.exd6, playing 3.Nf3 first, when af-

ter 3...Bg4, 4.e4 Nd7 transposes into a gambit line of the **Philidor Defence** played by Blackburne. Black gets partial compensation for the pawn after 5.exd6 Bxd6 6.Be2 Ngf6 7.Nc3 Qe7.<sup>[6]</sup> However, White obtains a large advantage after 2...d6 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.Bg5! Qd7 5.exd6 Bxd6 6.Nbd2.<sup>[7]</sup>

### Soller Gambit

The **Soller Gambit**, 2...Nc6 3.Nf3 f6, was named after its German exponent Karl Soller. The immediate 2...f6 is sometimes seen as well, when 3.Nf3 Nc6 transposes, but 3.e4! Nc6 4.Bc4 gives White a large advantage.<sup>[8]</sup> In the Soller Gambit proper, **International Master** Gary Lane recommends 4.exf6 Nxf6 5.Bg5.<sup>[9]</sup> In this line Black gets partial compensation via 5...h6!, e.g. 6.Bh4 Bc5 (or 6...g5 at once) 7.e3 g5 or 6.Bxf6 Qxf6 7.c3 Bc5, although White keeps some advantage.<sup>[10][11]</sup>

White can also return the pawn via 4.e4, securing the better chances. Then after 4...fxe5 5.Bc4, 5...Nf6 6.Ng5! leads to complications that are very good for White, but 5...d6 may be an improvement.<sup>[12]</sup>

The **Felbecker Gambit**, 3...Bc5, usually followed by ...f6, is a variant on the Soller Gambit approach, when again Black may get partial compensation in such lines as 4.Nc3 f6 5.exf6 Nxf6 6.Bg5 d6 7.e3 h6, but 4.e4 is also critical, when Black's best is 4...Qe7 as 4...f6 5.Bc4! gives White a large advantage.<sup>[13]</sup>

### Zilbermints Gambit

The **Zilbermints Gambit**, 2...Nc6 3.Nf3 Nge7, was named after the American chess player Lev D. Zilbermints who had extensive analysis published on the line in *Blackmar Diemer Gambit World* issues 61–63. German **FIDE Master** Stefan Bucker provided further analysis in *Kaissiber* 5 and 6.<sup>[14]</sup> The idea is to play ...Ng6 and win the pawn back.

Gary Lane recommends the response 4.Bf4.<sup>[15]</sup> After 4...Ng6 5.Bg3, Zilbermints recommends either 5...Bc5 or 5...Qe7 6.Nc3 Qb4, when White's main responses are 7.Rb1, 7.Qd2 and 7.a3. After 7.Rb1, a possible continuation is 7...Qa5 8.Qd5 Bb4 9.Qxa5 Bxa5 10.e3 0-0 11.Bd3 Re8 12.Bxg6 Bxc3+ 13.bxc3 fxg6, when Black's superior pawn structure compensates for the lost pawn, while both 7.Qd2 and 7.a3 lead to considerable complications.<sup>[16]</sup> An alternative for White is 5.e3, but Black may get some compensation for the pawn after 5...d6.<sup>[17]</sup> If 4.Bg5, then Black obtains a good game via 4...h6 5.Bh4 g5 6.Bg3 Nf5.<sup>[15]</sup>

Thus 4.Nc3 is the most critical response, when 4...Ng6 is ineffective in view of 5.Bg5! Be7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.Nd5,<sup>[18]</sup> so Black may need to fall back upon 4...h6.<sup>[17]</sup>

### Englund Gambit main line

Most common today is 2.dxe5 Nc6 3.Nf3 Qe7.

White can try to keep the extra pawn with 4.Qd5!?, the **Stockholm Variation**. Black can try a queenside fianchetto with 4...b6, or attempt to regain the pawn with 4...h6, but neither of those lines provide enough compensation for the pawn.<sup>[19][20]</sup> Thus, Black usually challenges the e5-pawn immediately with 4...f6, when play continues 5.exf6 Nxf6 6.Qb3. Black does not get enough compensation with the delayed queenside fianchetto 6...b6<sup>[21]</sup> so the main line continues 6...d5. After 6...d5, 7.Nc3 Bd7!, threatening 8...Na5, leads to complications and good play for Black (e.g. 8.Bg5 Na5 or 8.Qxb7 Rb8 9.Qxc7 Qc5).<sup>[3]</sup> However, after the stronger responses 7.Bf4 and 7.Bg5 (intending 7...Bd7 8.e3), while Black retains some compensation for the pawn, White keeps an edge.<sup>[3][22]</sup>

Instead, White often allows Black to regain the pawn at the cost of lagging development. The main line runs 4.Bf4 Qb4+ 5.Bd2 (5.Nc3!? is perfectly playable, as 5...Qxf4 is well met by 6.Nd5!, while 5...Qxb2 6.Bd2 transposes to the main line) 5...Qxb2 6.Nc3!<sup>[3]</sup> White must avoid the notorious trap 6.Bc3?? Bb4!, which wins for Black after 7.Bxb4 Nxb4 or 7.Qd2 Bxc3 8.Qxc3 Qc1#.<sup>[23]</sup>

After 6.Nc3, 6...Nb4? is refuted by 7.Nd4 c6 8.a4.<sup>[3]</sup> The main line instead continues 6...Bb4 7.Rb1 Qa3 8.Rb3 Qa5 9.e4 Nge7 or 9.a3 Bxc3 10.Bxc3 Qc5, when White has some advantage due to the lead in development, but Black is not without chances due to the loose white pieces and shattered white pawn structure.<sup>[24]</sup> However, in 2006 Bucker pointed out that 8.Nd5!, previously analysed by Grob as leading only to an unclear position, has been improved for White, and Black has yet to find a good response.<sup>[3][25]</sup> Avrukh also considers this very strong, analyzing 8...Bxd2+ 9.Qxd2 Qxa2 10.Rd1 Kd8 11.Ng5 Nh6 12.e6! d6 (12...Qa5? 13.e7+! Ke8 14.Qxa5 Nxa5 15.Nxc7+ wins) 13.exf7 Rf8 14.Nxc7 Kxc7 15.Qxd6+ Kb6 16.Ne4! Qxc2 (or 16...Bf5 17.Nc3 Qxc2 18.Nd5+) 17.Nd2 Rxf7 18.Rb1+ Qxb1+ 19.Nxb1 with “a decisive advantage”. Stefan Bucker offers 13...Qa5 for Black<sup>[25]</sup> but concludes that White is clearly better after 14.c3 Rf8 15.Nxh7 Rxf7 16.Ng5 Rf8 17.g3 Ne5 18.Bg2 Nh7 19.Nxf7+ Rxf7 20.Qd4. Avrukh also considers 8...Ba5 9.Rb5 Bxd2+ (9...a6? 10.Rxa5 Nxa5 11.Nxc7+) 10.Qxd2 Kd8 11.Ng5 (the traditional reply 11.e4 may allow Black a playable game after 11...a6!? according to Bucker<sup>[25]</sup>) 11...Nh6 12.f4!? a6 13.Rb3 Qxa2 14.Nc3 Qa1+ 15.Rb1 Qa5 16.e3 when Black is “close to losing”, for example 16...Re8 17.Bc4 Nxe5 18.fxe5 Qxe5 19.Bxf7! Qxg5 20.Bxe8 Kxe8 21.Nd5 Qe5 22.0-0 and “White wins.”<sup>[26]</sup> Bucker also considers 9.e4!? to be a strong alternative to 9.Rb5, leading to a clear advantage for White.<sup>[25]</sup> Black therefore sometimes tries 4...d6 instead, continuing 5.exd6 Qf6 6.Qc1 (or 6.e3,

returning the pawn).

White's other major try for advantage is 4.Nc3 Nxe5 5.e4, securing a lead in development and leaving Black's queen awkwardly placed on e7.<sup>[27]</sup> Stefan Bucker recommends 5...Nf6 6.Bg5 c6 7.Nxe5 Qxe5 8.f4 Qe6, with a playable game but some advantage for White.<sup>[3]</sup> Viktor Korchnoi won a miniature in a 1978 simultaneous exhibition with 4.Nc3 Nxe5 5.Nd5 Nxf3+ 6.gxf3 Qd8 7.Qd4 d6 8.Bg5!,<sup>[28]</sup> but according to Bucker Black gets a playable game with 8...f6 9.Bd2 c6 10.Nf4 Qb6.<sup>[3]</sup>

### Alternatives for White

White can decline the Englund Gambit in a number of ways, including 2.e4 (transposing to the Centre Game) or 2.c3 (transposing to the Saragossa Opening). 2.d5 is sometimes seen, but leaves Black with a good game after 2...Bc5, while 2.e3 can be met by 2...exd4 3.exd4 d5 transposing to the Exchange Variation of the French Defence, and in addition Black can avoid 3...d5 and simply develop with a good game. 2...Nc6 and 2...e4 may also be playable. After 2.Nf3, Black gets a good game with 2...exd4 3.Nxd4 d5, preparing ...c5, and 2...e4 3.Ne5 d6 4.Nc4 d5 is also good for Black.<sup>[29]</sup>

After 2.dxe5 Nc6, instead of 3.Nf3, White can also defend the e5-pawn with 3.Bf4, when Bucker suggests either 3...g5 followed by 4...Bg7, or 3...f6 hoping to get an improved version of the Soller Gambit.<sup>[3]</sup> 3.f4 is sometimes seen, but Black has reasonable chances after 3...f6 or 3...d6. White can also transpose to a line of the Nimzowitsch Defence with 3.e4.

### 9.15.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 9.15.4 References

#### Notes

- [1] Avrukh 2010, p. 594.
- [2] Bucker 1988, p. 111.
- [3] "Over the Horizons: Visiting Planet Englund" (PDF). Retrieved 2008-11-19.
- [4] "Daring Defences to 1.d4". Retrieved 2009-05-03.
- [5] Hooper and Whyld 1992, p. 73 ("Charlick Gambit" entry).
- [6] Bucker 1988, p. 28.

- [7] Smith and Hall 1994, p. 110.
- [8] Bucker 1988, p. 51.
- [9] "Opening Lanes: The World Cup" (PDF). Retrieved 2008-11-19.
- [10] Bucker 1988, p.64.
- [11] Kaissiber 5, p. 31.
- [12] Kaissiber 5, p. 33.
- [13] Bucker 1988, p. 55.
- [14] Kaissiber 5, p. 35.
- [15] "Opening Lanes: The Dashing Danish". Retrieved 2008-11-19.
- [16] Kaissiber 5, p. 37.
- [17] Kaissiber 5, p. 36.
- [18] Bucker 1988,p.54.
- [19] Bucker 1988, p. 83.
- [20] Bucker 1988, p. 94.
- [21] Bucker 1988, p. 95.
- [22] Bucker 1988, p. 104.
- [23] Avrukh 2010, p. 595.
- [24] Andrew Martin, Chess Monthly 2000.
- [25] "Over the Horizons: Repairing the Englund Gambit" (PDF). Retrieved 2010-04-22.
- [26] Avrukh 2010, pp. 595–96.
- [27] Avrukh 2010, pp. 594–95.
- [28] Korchnoi–Koning, simul 1978. The game concluded 8...Qd7 9.Bh3! Qxh3 10.Nxc7+ Kd7 11.Nxa8 Qg2 12.Qa4+ Ke6 13.Qe8+ Kf5 14.Qe4+ Kxg5 15.f4+ 1–0
- [29] Bucker 1988, p.139

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- Smith, Ken and Hall, John (1994). *The Englund Gambit and the Blackburne–Hartlaub Gambit Complex*. Chess Digest. ISBN 0-87568-242-1.

### 9.15.5 External links

- Gary Lane (2000). “Opening Lanes” (PDF). Chesscafe.com.
- Gary Lane (2002). “Opening Lanes” (PDF). Chesscafe.com.
- Stefan Bücker (2006). “Over the Horizons” (PDF). Chesscafe.com.
- 1,171 Games at Chess.com
- Opening Report: 1.d4 e5 (1819 games)
- Stefan Bücker (2009). “Over the Horizons Part 2” (PDF). Chesscafe.com.

## 9.16 Polish Defense

The **Polish Defense** is the name commonly given to one of several sequences of chess opening moves characterized by an early ...b5 by Black. The name “Polish Defense” is given by analogy to the so-called Polish Opening (ECO A40), 1.b4. The original line was

1. d4 b5

as played by Alexander Wagner, a Polish player and openings analyst, against Kuhn in the 1913 Swiss Correspondence Championship. Wagner published an analysis of the opening in *Deutsches Wochensach* in 1914, when he was living in Stanislau, Galicia, Austria-Hungary (now Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine).<sup>[1]</sup> Later the name was also applied to

1.d4 Nf6  
2.Nf3 b5

and other variants where Black delays playing ...b5 until the second or third move, which are sometimes called the **Polish Defense Deferred**.

### 9.16.1 Details

With ...b5, Black tries to take control of c4, but 1.d4 b5 is generally considered dubious after 2.e4, threatening 3.Bxb5. *Modern Chess Openings* (MCO-14, 1999) allots two columns to the Polish, commenting that the variants where Black waits and plays 2...b5 instead of 1...b5 are much safer.<sup>[2]</sup> Earlier editions of MCO give only a single column of analysis and consider only the 2...b5 lines. MCO-9 (1957), states that the Polish “fails because it neglects the centre”.<sup>[3]</sup> That negative verdict was softened in the next edition, MCO-10 (1965), to say that the Polish “neglects the centre, but is not refuted”.<sup>[4]</sup> MCO-12 (1982) retains the “not refuted” assessment and notes that the Polish can result by transposition from the Réti system.<sup>[5]</sup> Other judgments have been more harsh. The 1...b5 Polish was deemed “entirely valueless” by I. A. Horowitz in 1964.<sup>[6]</sup>

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 b5

The Polish is closely related to the St. George Defence (1.e4 a6, usually followed by 2.d4 b5) into which it often transposes. Boris Spassky played 1.d4 b5 against Tigran Petrosian in the decisive 22nd game of their world championship match in 1966. Spassky equalized,<sup>[7]</sup> but rejected an opportunity to draw, as he was behind by a point in the match and with at most three games remaining, he was practically forced to play for a win. Petrosian won the game, thus ensuring retention of his title.<sup>[8]</sup>

The Polish can be used to combat certain variations of the Réti Opening or King’s Indian Attack.<sup>[9]</sup> In particular, 1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 b5 is a fully respectable opening that has been successfully played by former World Champion Anatoly Karpov, among others.<sup>[10][11][12]</sup> It prepares to fianchetto Black’s queen bishop and prevents White from playing the otherwise desirable c4. Note that here 3.e4 would allow 3...Nxe4. White’s second move commits him to fianchettoing his king bishop rather than developing it along the f1–a6 diagonal, due to the weakness which would result on the long diagonal.

1...b5 against the English Opening is known as the Halibut Gambit (or Jaenisch gambit).<sup>[13][14][15]</sup>

### 9.16.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 9.16.3 References

- [1] Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). “Polish Defence”. *The Oxford Companion To Chess*. Oxford University.

sity. p. 313. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.

- [2] De Firmian, Nick (1999). *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-14*. Random House Puzzles & Games. p. 497. ISBN 0-8129-3084-3.
- [3] Korn, Walter (1957). *Modern Chess Openings: Ninth Edition*. Pitman Publishing. p. 225.
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- [5] Korn, Walter (1982). *Modern Chess Openings: Twelfth Edition*. David McKay. p. 310. ISBN 0-679-13500-6.
- [6] Horowitz, I. A. (1964). *Chess Openings: Theory and Practice*. Simon & Schuster. p. 780. ISBN 0-671-20553-6.
- [7] MCO-14, p.503 note (j)
- [8] Tigran Vartanovich Petrosian vs Boris Spassky game score. (Chessgames.com)
- [9] “Chess Opening Explorer: 1. Nf3 Nf6 2. g3 b5”. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2007-05-02.
- [10] Mednis, Edmar (1994). *How Karpov Wins* (2nd ed.). Dover. p. 128. ISBN 0-486-27881-6.
- [11] “Saidy v. Karpov, San Antonio 1972”. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2007-05-02.
- [12] “Korchnoi v. Karpov, Moscow 1973”. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2007-05-02.
- [13] Chess Opening Explorer
- [14] English Opening: Halibut Gambit (A10) – Openings – Chess.com
- [15] English Opening Halibut Gambit – Chess Opening

## 9.17 Wade Defence

The **Wade Defence** is a chess opening characterised by the initial moves:

1. d4 d6
2. Nf3 Bg4

The position can also arise from the move order 1.Nf3 d6 2.d4 Bg4.

### 9.17.1 History

The opening is named after British IM Bob Wade<sup>[1]</sup> (1921–2008), originally from New Zealand, who played it for over 30 years. A number of grandmasters have often played the opening, including Julian Hodgson, Michael Adams, Vlastimil Jansa, and Tony Miles.

Jouni Yrjölä and Jussi Tella, in their book *An Explosive Chess Opening Repertoire for Black*, state that the opening:

[...] was played in 1938 by Rudolf Spielmann and used in the 1960s by Stein and Kavalek among others ... But the towering figure of the line is Julian Hodgson, who popularized it with many dynamic performances. Among the other practitioners, the contributions of Miles, Adams, Hickl and Jansa to the theoretical development of the line are worth mentioning.<sup>[2]</sup>

In recognition of Hodgson’s contributions, the authors refer to the opening as the “Hodgson Variation” rather than the “Wade Defence”.

### 9.17.2 Illustrative games

- Veselin Topalov–Michael Adams, Dortmund 1996:<sup>[3]</sup>  
 1. Nf3 d6 2. d4 Bg4 3. c4 Nd7 4. e4 Bxf3!? 5. Qxf3 g6 6. Nc3 Bg7 7. Qd1 c5! 8. d5 Bxc3+! 9. bxc3 Ngf6 10. f3 Qa5 11. Qb3 0-0-0 12. Be2 Rdg8! 13. Rb1 Qc7 14. Be3 Kb8 15. Qc2 g5 16. 0-0 Rg6 17. Rb2 Ka8 18. Rfb1 Rb8! 19. Kh1 h5 20. Qd2? (better is 20.Rb5 “with a more unclear position”) g4 21. Qc2 gxf3 22. gxf3 Ne5 23. f4 Qc8 24. Bf1? (better is 24.f5 Rg7 25.Bh6 Rg8 26.Bf4 Ned7, although Black still has a large advantage) Nxc4! (with a winning position) 25. Bxc4 Qh3 26. Rf1 Qxe3 27. Qd3 Qxe4+ 28. Qxe4 Nxe4 29. Bd3 f5 30. Bxe4 fxe4 31. Re2 a6 32. Rxe4 Rg7 33. a4 Ka7 34. Rfe1 Rf8 35. a5 Rff7 36. R1e3 Rg4 37. Rxe7 Rxe7 38. Rxe7 Rxf4 39. Re6 Rc4 40. Rxd6 Rxc3 41. Rh6 Rd3 42. Rxh5 c4 43. Rh4 c3 44. Rc4 Rxd5 45. Rxc3 Rxa5 46. h4 Rh5 47. Rh3 b5 48. Kg2 Kb6 49. Kf3 a5 50. Ke2 b4 51. Kd2 Kb5 52. Kc2 a4 53. Kb2 Rf5 54. h5 a3 55. Kb1 Rf1+ 56. Ka2 Ka4 57. Rh4 Rf2+ 58. Ka1 a2 59. h6 Ka3 0-1<sup>[4]</sup>
- Reynaldo Vera–Boris Gulko, Lucerne 1993:<sup>[5]</sup>  
 1. d4 d6 2. Nf3 Bg4 3. c4 Nd7 4. Nc3 e5 5. e3 c6 6. h3 Bh5 7. Be2 Be7 8. 0-0 f5!? (8...Ngf6 is more solid) 9. c5? (better is 9.e4! f4 10.c5!) e4! 10. cxd6 Bxd6 11. Nd2 Bxe2 12. Qxe2 Ngf6 13. Nc4 Bc7 14. b3?! b5! 15. Nd2 Qe7 16. Rd1 0-0 17. Nf1 Nb6 18. Bb2 Nfd5 19. a4 f4! 20. exf4 Nxf4 21. Qxe4 Qg5

**22. Qf3 Rae8 23. Qg4?** (23.Re1) **Qxg4 24. hxc4 b4 25. Na2 Ne2+ 26. Kh1 Nd5 27. f3 Re6 28. Bc1 Rff6 29. g5 Rf5 30. Nh2 Bxh2 0–1** (31.Kxh2 Rh6+! 32.gxh6 Rh5#)<sup>[6]</sup>

### 9.17.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 9.17.4 Notes

- [1] See [Nigel Davies](#) article showing Wade’s own claim of his “own defence”.
- [2] [Yrjölä and Tella](#) (2001), p. 76
- [3] [Veselin Topalov vs Michael Adams game at ChessGames.com](#)
- [4] Notes based on those in [Yrjölä and Tella](#), p. 88.
- [5] [Reynaldo Vera vs Boris Gulko game at ChessGames.com](#)
- [6] Notes based on those in [Yrjölä and Tella](#), pp. 96-97.

### 9.17.5 References

- [Jouni Yrjölä and Jussi Tella](#) (2001). *An Explosive Chess Opening Repertoire for Black*. Gambit Publications Ltd. ISBN 1-901983-501.

# Chapter 10

## Flank openings

### 10.1 Flank opening

A **flank opening** is a chess opening played by White and typified by play on one or both **flanks** (the portion of the chess board outside the central d and e files). White plays in **hypermodern** style, attacking the center from the flanks with **pieces** rather than occupying it with **pawns**. These openings are played often, and 1.Nf3 and 1.c4 trail only 1.e4 and 1.d4 in popularity as opening moves.

- 1.Nf3 **Zukertort Opening** – characteristically followed by fianchettoing one or both bishops, and without an early d4
- 1.c4 **English Opening**
- 1.g3 **Benko Opening**
- 1.Nc3 **Dunst Opening**
- 1.f4 **Bird's Opening**
- 1.b3 **Larsen's Opening**
- 1.b4 **Sokolsky Opening**
- 1.g4 **Grob's Attack**

#### 10.1.1 1.Nf3

If White opens with 1.Nf3, the game often becomes one of the d4 openings (**closed games** or **semi-closed games**) by a different move order (this is called *transposition*), but unique openings such as the **Réti** and **King's Indian Attack** are also common. The **Réti** itself is characterized by White playing 1.Nf3, **fianchettoing** one or both bishops, and not playing an early d4 (which would generally transpose into one of the 1.d4 openings).

The **King's Indian Attack** (KIA) is a system of development that White may use in reply to almost any Black opening moves. The characteristic KIA setup is 1.Nf3, 2.g3, 3.Bg2, 4.0-0, 5.d3, 6.Nbd2, and 7.e4, although these moves may

be played in many different orders. In fact, the KIA is probably most often reached after 1.e4 when White uses it to respond to a Black attempt to play one of the **semi-open games** such as the **Caro-Kann**, **French**, or **Sicilian**, or even the **open games** which usually come after 1.e4 e5. Its greatest appeal may be that by adopting a set pattern of development, White can avoid the large amount of opening study required to prepare to meet the many different possible Black replies to 1.e4.

#### 10.1.2 1.c4

**English Opening**

The **English** also frequently transposes into a d4 opening, but it can take on independent character as well including symmetrical variations (1.c4 c5) and the **Sicilian Defense** in reverse (1.c4 e5).

#### 10.1.3 1.f4

**Bird's Opening**

With **Bird's Opening** White tries to get a strong grip on the e5-square. The opening can resemble a **Dutch Defense** in reverse after 1.f4 d5, or Black may try to disrupt White by playing 1...e5!? (**From's Gambit**).

#### 10.1.4 Others

**Larsen's Opening** (1.b3) and the **Sokolsky Opening** (1.b4) are occasionally seen in **grandmaster** play. **Benko** used 1.g3 (**Benko Opening**) to defeat both **Fischer** and **Tal** in the 1962 **Candidates Tournament** in **Curaçao**.

### 10.1.5 See also

- Open Game (1.e4 e5)
- Semi-Open Game (1.e4 other)
- Closed Game (1.d4 d5)
- Semi-Closed Game (1.d4 other)
- Irregular chess opening

### 10.1.6 References

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992), *The Oxford Companion to Chess*, Oxford University, ISBN 0-19-280049-3
- De Firmian, Nick (1999), *Modern Chess Openings* (MCO-14 ed.), Random House Puzzles & Games, ISBN 0-8129-3084-3

### 10.1.7 Further reading

- Kosten, Tony; Palliser, Richard; Vigus, James (2008), *Dangerous Weapons: Flank Openings*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 978-1-85744-583-1

## 10.2 Larsen's Opening

**Larsen's Opening** (also called the **Queen's Fianchetto Opening**) is a chess opening starting with the move:

1. b3

It is named after the Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen. Larsen was inspired by the example of the great Latvian-Danish player and theoretician Aron Nimzowitsch (1886–1935), who often played 1.Nf3 followed by 2.b3, which is sometimes called the Nimzowitsch–Larsen Attack. It is classified under the A01 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

The flank opening move 1.b3 prepares to fianchetto the queen's bishop where it will help control the central squares in hypermodern fashion and put useful pressure on Black's kingside. The b2-bishop is often a source of recurring irritation for Black, who should not treat it lightly.

Although Bent Larsen was initially very successful with this opening, it suffered a setback in the 1970 USSR vs. Rest of the World match in Belgrade, in which Larsen played this opening against reigning World Champion Boris Spassky and lost in 17 moves.<sup>[1]</sup> (Of the 42 games between Spassky

and Larsen, Spassky won overall with 19 wins, 6 losses, and 17 draws.)<sup>[2]</sup> Larsen was also decisively defeated when playing this opening against Rosendo Balinas, Jr. at Manila in 1975.<sup>[3]</sup>

Notably, the opening received interest from Bobby Fischer the same year, who employed 1.b3 on at least five occasions, winning all five, including games with GMs Filip and Mecking (Palma de Mallorca 1970 Interzonal), GM Tukmakov (Buenos Aires 1970), and GM Andersson (Siegen 1970).

### 10.2.1 Popularity

The move 1.b3 is less popular than 1.g3 (**Benko's Opening**), which prepares a quick kingside castling. According to ChessBase, 1.b3 ranks sixth in popularity out of the possible twenty first moves while the fifth-ranking 1.g3 is about three times as popular. Larsen frequently used unconventional openings of this sort. He believed it to be an advantage in that Black, usually unfamiliar with such openings, is forced to rely on his own abilities instead of relying on memorized, well-analyzed moves of more common White openings.

The relative unpopularity of 1.b3 compared to 1.g3, is probably because with 2.Bg2, the move c4 is often played later to strengthen the fianchettoed bishop's diagonal; whereas if f4 is played to strengthen the bishop's diagonal after 1.b3 and 2.Bb2, it weakens the kingside—the usual destination for White's king when castling.

### 10.2.2 Main lines

Black has several options to meet 1.b3. The most common are:

- 1...e5, the **Modern Variation**, is the most common response, making a grab for the centre and limiting the scope of the white bishop. Play typically continues 2.Bb2 Nc6. Then the Main line is 3.e3 d5 4.Bb5 Bd6 5.c4. After 2.Bb2 Nc6, 3.f4 is the Paschman. Gambit. After 2.Bb2, 2...f5 3.e4 is called the **Ringelbach Gambit**.
- 1...d5, the **Classical Variation**, is the second most common, also making a grab for the centre and preserving the option to fianchetto the king's bishop to oppose the White one. White can play 2.Nf3 to transpose to the A06 line (see more below). Or else, White can play 2.Bb2 to proceed in the A01 line.
- 1...Nf6, the **Indian Variation**, developing a piece and not committing to a particular pawn formation just yet.

2.Bb2 and if 2...g6 then 3.e4, taking advantage of the pinned knight (e.g., not 3...Nxe4 4.Bxh8, winning a rook at the price of a pawn). 3.g4 is called the **Spike Variation**

- 1...c5, the **English Variation**, retaining the options of ...d5, or ...d6 followed by ...e5. 2.c4 transposing to an **English Opening** or 2.e4 transposing to a **Sicilian Defence**.
- 1...f5, the **Dutch Variation**. 2.Nf3.

Less common lines include:

- 1...e6, with Black setting up a variation on the **French Defence**. Here Keene recommends 2.e4 and if 2...d5 then 3.Bb2.<sup>[4]</sup>
- 1...c6, a **Caro–Kann** variant preparing for ...d5. Again Keene recommends 2.e4 and if 2...d5, 3.Bb2.
- 1...b6, the **Symmetrical variation**, is completely fine for Black.
- 1...b5, the **Polish Variation**.
- 1...Nc6, a variant of the **Nimzowitsch Defence**, with this move, Black aims to provide support for the advance of e-file pawn. The most common sequence that Black applies is 2...e5 or less commonly 2...d5.

### 10.2.3 1.Nf3 Nf6 2.b3

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.b3 d5 3.Bb2

**1.Nf3 Nf6 2.b3** is a similar opening. Nimzowitsch preferred to make the knight move first. Black may play 2...d5 (given below) or 2...g6. After 2...d5, White usually plays 3.Bb2. With this move, Black usually plays 3...e6.

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.b3 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bb2

After 2...g6, White can play 3.g3, 3.Bb2, or 3.c4. The move 3.g3 is the same as 2.g3 g6 3.b3, which gives Reti Opening (A05) or King's Indian, Fianchetto without c4 (A49). With move 3.Bb2, Black usually plays 3...Bg7. White may play 4.g3 or 4.c4; 4.e3 is also possible. With move 3.c4, Black usually plays 3...Bg7. Then White will play 4.Bb2.

### 10.2.4 Nimzowitsch–Larsen Attack (A06)

1.Nf3 d5 2.b3

The opening 1.Nf3 d5 2.b3 (ECO A06) is called the *Nimzowitsch–Larsen Attack*. It can be derived from 1.b3, but 1.Nf3 is more usual. Common replies for Black are 2...c5, 2...Nf6, and 2...Bg4. 2...Nf6 is not that great for the usual reasons that Black should not make ...d5 and ...Nf6. 2...c5 is more common although 2...Bg4 is also possible. For each, White can play 3.Bb2 or 3.e3. Then 3.Bb2 can be followed by 4.e3.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 10.2.5 Example games

Larsen vs. Eley, 1972

1.b3 e5 2.Bb2 Nc6 3.e3 Nf6 4.Bb5 d6 5.Ne2 Bd7 6.0-0 Be7 7.f4 e4 8.Ng3 0-0 9.Bxc6 bxc6 10.c4 d5 11.Nc3 Re8 12.Rc1 Bg4 13.Nce2 Nd7 14.h3 Be2 15.Qxe2 Nc5 16.Qg4 g6 17.f5 Nd3 18.fxg6 hxg6 19.Rf7 Kf7 20.Rf1 Bf6 21.Bxf6 1-0

Keene vs. Kovacevic, 1973

1.Nf3 d5 2.b3 Bg4 3.Bb2 Nd7 4.g3 Bxf3 5.exf3 Ngf6 6.f4 e6 7.Bg2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.d3 a5 10.a4 c6 11.Nd2 b5 12.Qe2 bxa4 13.Rxa4 Nb6 14.Ra2 a4 15.Rfa1 axb3 16.Rxa8 Nxa8 17.Nxb3 Nb6 18.f5 exf5 19.Nd4 Qd7 20.Bh3 g6 21.Bxf5 gxf5 22.Ra7 Qxa7 23.Nxc6 Qd7 24.Nxe7 Kg7 25.Qh5 1-0

### 10.2.6 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 10.2.7 References

#### Notes

- [1] Larsen–Spassky 1970
- [2] <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chess.pl?page=1&pid=21136&pid2=11227&eresult=>
- [3] Larsen–Balinas 1975
- [4] Keene, Raymond (1977). *Nimzowitsch/Larsen Attack*. London: B.T. Batsford Ltd.
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- Schiller, Eric (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. pp. 320–29. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.

### 10.2.8 Further reading

- Odessky, Ilya (2008). *Play 1.b3!*. New In Chess. ISBN 978-9056912567.

### 10.2.9 External links

- ECO A01: Nimzovich–Larsen Attack

## 10.3 English Opening

The **English Opening** is a chess opening that begins with the move:

1. c4

A **flank opening**, it is the fourth most popular<sup>[1][2]</sup> and, according to various databases, anywhere from one of the two most successful<sup>[1]</sup> to the fourth most successful<sup>[3]</sup> of White's twenty possible first moves. White begins the fight for the centre by staking a claim to the d5 square from the wing, in **hypermodern** style. Although many lines of the English have a distinct character, the opening is often used as a **transpositional** device in much the same way as 1.Nf3 – to avoid such highly regarded responses to 1.d4 as the **Nimzo–Indian** and **Grünfeld** defences, and is considered reliable and flexible.<sup>[4]</sup>

The English derives its name from the English (unofficial) world champion, Howard Staunton, who played it during his 1843 match with Saint-Amant and at London 1851, the first international tournament.<sup>[5]</sup> It did not inspire Staunton's contemporaries, and only caught on in the twentieth century.<sup>[5]</sup> It is now recognised as a solid opening that may be used to reach both classical and hypermodern positions. Mikhail Botvinnik, Tigran Petrosian, Anatoly Karpov, Garry Kasparov and Magnus Carlsen employed it during their world championship matches. Bobby Fischer created a stir when he switched to it from his customary 1.e4 late in his career, employing it against Lev Polugaevsky and Oscar Panno at the Palma de Mallorca Interzonal in 1970

and in his 1972 world championship match against Boris Spassky.

### 10.3.1 Taxonomy

Opening theoreticians who write on the English Opening break the opening down into three broad categories, generally determined by Black's choice of defensive setups.

#### Symmetrical Defense: 1...c5

The *Symmetrical Defense* (classified A30–39 in ECO), which is 1...c5, and is so named because both of the c-pawns are advanced two squares, maintaining symmetry. Note that Black can reach the Symmetrical Defense through many move orders by deferring ...c5, and often does. For example, 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 (or 2.Nf3) c5 is a Symmetrical Defense even though Black played ...Nf6 before ...c5.

There are several types of positions that can arise from the Symmetrical Defense. Among the ideas are:<sup>[6]</sup>

- The **Hedgehog system**<sup>[7]</sup> involves a solid but flexible defence where Black develops by b6, e6, Bb7, and Be7, before controlling the fifth rank with moves such as a6 and d6. The game typically involves extended maneuvering, but both players need to be on the lookout for favorable pawn advances and pawn breaks.
- The double fianchetto defence involves Black developing both bishops by fianchetto to g7 and b7. The line is fairly solid and difficult to defeat at the grandmaster level. Some lines are considered highly drawish, for instance if White's bishops are also fianchettoed to g2 and b2 there may be many simplifications leading to a simplified and equal position.

Either player may make an early break in the centre with the d-pawn.

- An early d2–d4 for White can arise in 1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4. Since this position is often reached after the transposition 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.Nf3, where White avoided the **Benoni Defense** that would arise after 3.d5, this line is often called the Anti-Benoni. The games can give a large variety of positional and tactical ideas. Games usually continue with 3...cxd4 4.Nxd4 when Black can choose between the sharp 4...e5 or more sedate moves like the Hedgehog-like 4...b6 or the more common 4...e6.
- A typical line of play where Black plays an early d5 is 1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 d5, when White usually

trades off in the centre 4.cxd5 Nxd5. White can either challenge the centre with 5.d4 or 5.e4 or allow Black a space advantage in the centre with 5.g3. In the latter case, Black can play 5...Nc6 6.Bg2 Nc7 followed by 7...e5, reaching a reversed **Maróczy Bind** position called the Rubinstein System.

### Reversed Sicilian: 1...e5

The *Reversed Sicilian* (classified A20–29 in ECO) is another broad category of defence, introduced by the response 1...e5. Note again, that Black can delay playing ...e5, for example 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3 e5 whereupon even though ...e5 has been delayed, once it is played the defence is classified as a Reversed Sicilian.

- **1...e5** White has Black's position in the Sicilian but with an extra tempo. This is often called the Reversed Sicilian,<sup>[8]</sup> though others call it the King's English.<sup>[9]</sup> Bruce Leverett, writing the English chapter in *MCO14*, stated, "It is natural to treat the English as a Sicilian reversed, but the results are often surprising—main lines in the Sicilian Defense correspond to obscure side variations in the English, and vice versa."

### Other variations

The third broad category are the non-...e5 and non-...c5 responses, classified A10–19 in ECO. Most often these defences consist of ...Nf6, ...e6, and ...d5 or ...Bb4 systemic responses by Black, or a Slav-like system consisting of ...c6 and ...d5, a direct King's **Indian Defense** setup with ...Nf6, ...g6, ...Bg7, ...0-0, after which ...c5 and ...e5 are eschewed, or 1...f5, which usually transposes to a **Dutch Defense** once White plays d4. All irregular responses such as 1...b6 and 1...g5 are also lumped into this third broad category.

Common responses include:<sup>[1]</sup>

- **1...Nf6**

The most common response to 1.c4, often played to arrive at an **Indian Defence**. However, more than half the time, Black subsequently elects to transpose into either a Symmetrical Defense with ...c5, or a Reversed Sicilian with ...e5.

- **1...e6**

Can lead to a **Queen's Gambit Declined** after 2.Nc3 d5 3.d4, but White often prefers 2.Nf3, which may lead to a variety of openings.

- **1...f5**

Leads to a **Dutch Defense** when White follows up with d4. Other choices for White are 2.Nc3, 2.Nf3, and 2.g3, where Black usually plays ...Nf6.

- **1...g6**

May lead to a **Modern Defense** or after d6 and Nf6 to the **King's Indian Defence**, or stay within English lines.

- **1...c6**

Can lead to a **Slav Defence** after 2.d4 d5, but White will often prefer a **Caro–Kann Defence** with 2.e4 d5, or a **Réti Opening** after 2.Nf3 d5 3.b3.

- **1...b6**

The **English Defence**. This setup involves the fianchetto of the queenside bishop and 2...e6. Often Black will defer the move ...Nf6, choosing to attack the centre with ...f5 and/or ...Qh4. The English grandmasters **Tony Miles** and **Jonathan Speelman** have successfully used this opening.

- **1...g5**

An eccentric response known as **Myers' Defense** after **Hugh Myers'** advocacy of it in print and actual play.<sup>[10][11][12]</sup> It is intended as an improved **Grob's Attack**; after 2.d4, Black will put pressure on the d4 square with moves such as ...Bg7, ...c5, and ...Qb6.<sup>[11][13]</sup> According to *Nunn's Chess Openings*, White obtains a small advantage after 2.d4 Bg7 (offering a Grob-like gambit: 3.Bxg5 c5) 3.Nc3 h6 4.e4.<sup>[14]</sup> Myers recommended 3...c5 (instead of 3...h6); in response, **Joel Benjamin** advocates 4.dxc5!<sup>[11]</sup>

- **1...b5**

Called the **Jaenisch gambit** after **Carl Jaenisch**,<sup>[15]</sup> and dubbed the **Halibut Gambit** by Eric Schiller "because it belongs at the bottom of the sea." Black obtains no compensation for the sacrificed pawn.<sup>[16]</sup>

### 10.3.2 Transposition potential

If White plays an early d4, the game will usually transpose into either the **Queen's Gambit** or an **Indian Defence**. For example, after 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 g6 3.d4 d5 the game has transposed into the **Grünfeld Defence**, usually reached by the move order 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5.

Note, however, that White can also play 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 g6 3.e4, making it impossible for Black to reach a Grünfeld, instead more or less forcing him into lines of the **King's Indian Defence** with 3...d6. Black also cannot force a Grünfeld with 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5, since White can deviate with 3.cxd5 Nxd5 4.g3, a line played several times by **Mikhail Botvinnik** in 1958, in his final match for the world championship with **Vasily Smyslov**.

Instead of playing an early d4, White can also play Nf3 and fianchetto the king's bishop (g3 and Bg2), transposing into a Rétí Opening.

Also, after 1.c4 c6, White can transpose into the **Polish Opening**, **Outflank Variation**, by playing 2.b4!?, which can be used as a surprise weapon if Black does not know very much about the Polish Opening.<sup>[17]</sup>

The many different transpositional possibilities available to White make the English a slippery opening for Black to defend against, and make it necessary for him to consider carefully what move order to employ. For instance, if Black would like to play a **Queen's Gambit Declined**, the most accurate move order to do so is 1...e6 2.d4 d5. (Of course, White can again play the Rétí instead with 2.Nf3 d5 3.b3.) If Black plays instead 1...Nf6 2.Nc3 e6, White can avoid the QGD by playing 3.e4, the Flohr-Mikenas Attack.

### 10.3.3 ECO

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* has classified the English Opening under the codes A10 through A39:

- A10 1.c4
- A11 1.c4 c6
- A12 1.c4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.b3
- A13 1.c4 e6
- A14 1.c4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.0-0
- A15 1.c4 Nf6
- A16 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3
- A17 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6
- A18 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.e4 (Mikenas-Carls Variation)

- A19 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.e4 c5
- A20 1.c4 e5
- A21 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3
- A22 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6
- A23 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.g3 c6 (**Bremen System**, **Keres Variation**)
- A24 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.g3 g6 (Bremen System with ...g6)
- A25 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6
- A26 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.d3 d6
- A27 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3 (Three Knights System)
- A28 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3 Nf6
- A29 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.g3 (Four Knights, Kingside Fianchetto)
- A30 1.c4 c5 (Symmetrical Variation)
- A31 1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 (Symmetrical, **Benoni Formation**)
- A32 1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e6
- A33 1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e6 5.Nc3 Nc6
- A34 1.c4 c5 2.Nc3
- A35 1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6
- A36 1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3
- A37 1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nf3
- A38 1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nf3 Nf6
- A39 1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.0-0 0-0 7.d4

### 10.3.4 Depiction in cinema

The English Opening is used by **Professor Moriarty** in the film *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* as he and Holmes discuss their competing plans over a game of chess. Both Holmes and Moriarty eventually play the final moves blindfolded by citing out the last moves in **descriptive notation** (rather than algebraic, as the former was contemporary in the late 19th century), ending in Holmes checkmating Moriarty, just as Watson foils Moriarty's plans.

The English Opening is also used in *Pawn Sacrifice* by Bobby Fischer in the climactic game six of the *1972 World Chess Championship* against Boris Spassky.

### 10.3.5 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 10.3.6 References

- [1] Meyer-Kahlen, Stefan. "Shredder opening database statistics". Retrieved 2008-01-19.
- [2] "Chess Opening Explorer". Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2008-01-19.
- [3] "Chess Openings Database statistics". Retrieved 2009-08-16.
- [4] *Chess Life* **59** (1–7 ed.). United States Chess Federation. 2004. p. 303.
- [5] De Firmian, Nick (2008). *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-15*. New York: David McKay Co. p. 675. ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7.
- [6] Cummings, David (October 1, 2001). *Symmetrical English*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-292-2. ISBN 1-85744-292-X.
- [7] De Firmian, Nick (1999). *Modern Chess Openings: MCO-14*. New York: David McKay Co. pp. 661–665. ISBN 0-8129-3084-3.
- [8] Weeks, Mark. "Chess Opening Tutorial : English – 1...e5". About, Inc. Archived from the original on December 3, 2007. Retrieved 2008-01-19.
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- [10] ChessBase.com, Hugh Myers (1930–2008), opening theoretician (2008-12-25). Retrieved on 2008-12-25.
- [11] Stefan Bücker, The Impoliteness of Ice Age Openings. Retrieved on 2005-12-27.
- [12] Rick Kennedy, *Review of A Chess Explorer*. Retrieved on 2008-12-27.
- [13] Watson remarks, "Note ... how White (by his shockingly committal first move) has forfeited his chance for [c3], the key move in several of the most effective defences to Grob's Attack". John L. Watson, *English: Franco, Slav and Flank Defences*, Batsford, 1981, p. 103. ISBN 0-7134-2690-X. Watson considers 1...g5 "playable". *Id.*
- [14] John Nunn, Graham Burgess, John Emms, and Joe Gallagher, *Nunn's Chess Openings*, Everyman Publishers, 1999, p. 19 n. 1. ISBN 1-85744-221-0.
- [15] <http://www.365chess.com/opening.php?m=3&n=887&ms=c4.b5&ns=15.887>

[16] Schiller, Eric (1998). "English Opening • Halbut Gambit". *Unorthodox Chess Openings*. Cardoza Publishing. pp. 135–36. ISBN 0-940685-73-6.

[17] Silman, Jeremy (2004). "The Dynamic English". Retrieved 2008-01-19.

### 10.3.7 Further reading

- Kallai, Gabor; Ribli, Zoltán (1993). *Winning With the English*. Henry Holt. ISBN 978-0-8050-2642-9.
- Kosten, Tony (1999). *The Dynamic English*. Gambit Publications. ISBN 978-1-901983-14-2.
- Hansen, Carsten (2001). *The Symmetrical English. Gambit*. ISBN 978-1-901983-40-1.
- Pritchett, Craig (2008). *Play the English*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-545-9.

### 10.3.8 External links

- Database Of English Opening Variations

## 10.4 Bird's Opening

**Bird's Opening** (or the **Dutch Attack**) is a chess opening characterised by the move:

1. f4

Bird's is a standard but never popular flank opening. White's strategic ideas involve control of the e5-square without occupying it, but his first move is also non-developing and slightly weakens his kingside. Black may challenge White's plan to control e5 immediately by playing **From's Gambit** (1...e5!). However, the From's Gambit is notoriously double edged and should only be played after significant study.

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* assigns two codes for Bird's Opening: A02 (1.f4) and A03 (1.f4 d5).

### 10.4.1 History

The opening was mentioned by Luis Ramírez de Lucena in his book *Repetición de Amores y Arte de Ajedrez con Cien Juegos de Partido*, published circa 1497. In the mid-nineteenth century the opening was sometimes played by La Bourdonnais and Elijah Williams, among others. The British master Henry Edward Bird first played it in 1855

and continued to do so for the next 40 years.<sup>[1]</sup> In 1885, the *Hereford Times* named it after him.<sup>[2]</sup> In the first half of the 20th century Aron Nimzowitsch and Savielly Tartakower sometimes played 1.f4.<sup>[3]</sup> In more recent decades, Grandmasters who have used the Bird's with any regularity include Bent Larsen, Andrew Soltis, Lars Karlsson,<sup>[4]</sup> Mikhail Gurevich, and Henrik Danielsen.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 10.4.2 1...d5

Black's most common response is 1...d5, when the game can take on the character of a **Dutch Defence** (1.d4 f5) with colors reversed. White will then often either **fianchetto** his king's bishop with Nf3, g3, Bg2, and 0-0 with a reversed Leningrad Dutch; adopt a **Stonewall formation** with pawns on d4, e3, and f4 and attempt a **kingside** attack; or fianchetto his queen's bishop to increase his hold on the e5 square. Another strategy, by analogy with the Ilyin–Zhenevsky variation of the Dutch Defence, involves White playing e3, Be2, 0-0, d3 and attempting to achieve the break e3–e4 by various means, e.g. Ne5, Bf3, Qe2 and finally e3–e4, or simply Nc3 followed by e4. Timothy Taylor's book on Bird's Opening puts the main line Bird's Opening as follows: 1.f4 d5 2.Nf3 g6 3.e3 Bg7 4.Be2 Nf6 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 c5.

### 10.4.3 From's Gambit

Black's sharpest try is 1...e5!?, **From's Gambit**, named for the Danish chess player Martin Severin From (1828–1895). White then has the option to **transpose** into the **King's Gambit** with 2.e4. This is an important option which may cause Black to consider playing a different line if he wishes to avoid the King's Gambit. It has been observed that one of the possible disadvantages of From's Gambit is that it is very easy for White to avoid.

If White accepts the gambit with 2.fxe5, Black must choose between the main line 2...d6 and the rather obscure 2...Nc6. After 2...Nc6, **International Master** (IM) Timothy Taylor, in his 2005 book on the Bird's, recommends 3.Nc3! Nxe5 4.d4 intending 5.e4, rather than 3.Nf3?! g5! when Black stands well.<sup>[6]</sup> After the normal 2...d6 3.exd6 Bxd6, White must play 4.Nf3, avoiding 4.Nc3?? Qh4+ 5.g3 Qxg3+ 5.hxg3 Bxg3 checkmate. Then Black again has two alternatives: 4...g5 to drive away White's knight, and 4...Nf6, threatening 5...Ng4 and 6...Nxh2! Future **World Champion Emanuel Lasker** introduced 4...g5 in the game Bird–Lasker, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1892, so it is known as “Lasker's Variation”.<sup>[7]</sup> Taylor considers 4...g5 dubious; a quiet response that he considers favorable for White is 5.d4 g4 6.Ne5! (6.Ng5? leads to a dubious piece sacrifice) Bxe5 7.dxe5 Qxd1+ 8.Kxd1 Nc6 9.Nc3! Be6 (9...Nxe5?! 10.Bf4 f6 11.Nd5 Kd8 12.Nxf6!) 10.Bf4 0-0-0+ 11.Ke1

Nge7 12.e3 Ng6 13.Bg5 Rdf8 14.Bf6 Rhg8 15.Be2 Ngxe5 16.Rf1 “with the typical edge for White that is characteristic of this variation”, according to Taylor.<sup>[8]</sup> He also considers the sharper 5.g3 g4 6.Nh4 favorable for White, giving as the main line 6...Ne7 7.d4 Ng6 8.Nxg6 hxg6 9.Qd3 Nc6 (9...Rh5 10.Bg2; 9...Na6 10.c3) 10.c3 (10.Nc3? Nxd4! 11.Qxd4?? Bg3+ wins White's queen) Bf5 (10...Qe7 11.Bg2! Bd7 12.Nd2 0-0-0 13.Ne4! favored White in Taylor–Becerra Rivero, Minneapolis 2005) 11.e4 Qe7 12.Bg2 0-0-0 13.Be3. According to Taylor, White has a large advantage in all lines, although play remains extremely sharp, e.g. 13...Rde8 14.Nd2; 13...Rxb2 14.Rxb2 Bxg3+ 15.Kd1 Bxb2 16.exf5! Re8 17.fxc6! Qxe3 18.Qxe3 Rxe3 19.gxf7; or 13...Bd7 (threatening 14...Rxb2!) 14.Bf2!<sup>[9]</sup>

### 10.4.4 Other Black responses

- The flexible 1...Nf6 is also possible. Then if White plays 2.b3?! (2.Nf3 is safer), 2...d6! 3.Bb2?! (or 3.Nf3 e5! 4.fxe5 dxe5 5.Nxe5?? Qd4!) e5!, a sort of From's Gambit Deferred introduced by IM Michael Brooks, is dangerous for White, e.g. 4.fxe5 dxe5 5.Bxe5 Ng4! Then 6.Bb2 Bd6 “leaves White in huge trouble down the e1–h4 diagonal”, and Black wins an **exchange** after 7.Nf3 Bxb2! 8.Rxb2 Nxh2. After the alternative 6.Bg3, 6...Qf6! (even better than 6...Bd6) 7.c3 (not 7.Nc3? Ne3! 8.dxe3 Bb4) Bd6 is strong for Black.<sup>[10]</sup>
- Another popular response is 1...g6, a sort of **Modern Defense**, which may transpose into a reversed Dutch Defense (if Black plays ...d5 and ...c5), or a **Sicilian Defence** (if White plays e4 and Black plays ...c5). Black thus prevents White from playing on the a1–h8 diagonal.
- Also reasonable is 1...c5, hoping for a transposition into the **Tal Gambit**, a favorable variation of the **Sicilian Defence**, after 2.e4 d5! 3.exd5 (3.Nc3, the mellifluously-named “Toilet Variation,” is also possible) Nf6, but White need not oblige, and may build up more slowly with 2.Nf3, followed by g3, Bg2, d3 and possibly a later e4.
- The offbeat 1...b6!? is also known, and more soundly based than the same move after 1.e4 or 1.d4, since 1.f4 does not aid White's development, and weakens the a8–h1 diagonal as the move f3 is no longer available to shore up White's center. Taylor recommends 2.e4 Bb7 3.d3 e6 4.Nf3 Ne7 5.c3 d5 6.Qc2 Nd7 7.Be3, with a spatial advantage for White.<sup>[11]</sup>
- Also possible is 1...b5!?, a form of **Polish Defense**. After the natural 2.e4 Bb7, White has no good way

to protect e4 while maintaining his attack on b5, since 3.Nc3? b4 4.Nd5 e6 wins a pawn.

- If Black chooses the symmetrical reply 1...f5, Taylor considers White's best line to be quiet play with 2.b3 b6 3.Bb2 Bb7 4.e3, when 4...Nf6 5.Bxf6! exf6 6.Nf3 left White with the better **pawn structure** in Larsen–Colon Romero, San Juan 1969. Instead, 4...e6 5.Qh5+ forces the weakening 5...g6, with a slight advantage to White according to Taylor.<sup>[12]</sup> Also possible is the aggressive 2.e4!?, when Taylor analyzes 2...fxe4 3.d3 exd3 4.Bxd3 Nf6 5.Nf3 (5.g4 is well met by 5...d5, when after 6.g5, 6...Bg4 and 6...Ne4 both favor Black) 5...d5 6.0-0, when he considers White to have some, but not enough, compensation for the sacrificed pawn.<sup>[13]</sup> Another possible continuation is 2...fxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.g4, the **Swiss Gambit**. This gambit was named by **Alexander Wagner** (1868–1942), a **Polish** chess player and openings analyst who introduced it in the Swiss **correspondence game** Wagner–Kostin, 1910–11. The term “Swiss Gambit” is often used to refer more generally to 1.f4 f5 2.e4. Chess historian **Edward Winter** has criticized that usage, pointing out that 1.f4 f5 2.e4 was analyzed by F.A. Lange in the June 1859 *Deutsche Schachzeitung*, and was played by many players, including **Adolf Anderssen**, in the nineteenth century.<sup>[14]</sup>
- An aggressive but rare response is 1...g5?!, the **Hobbs Gambit**, with play possibly continuing 2.fxg5 h6, a sort of mirror image **Benko Gambit**. White can simply return the pawn with 3.g6, leaving Black with a weakened **kingside** after 3...fxg6. A variant is the **Hobbs–Zilbermints Gambit**, 1...h6 intending 2...g5; against this, White could proceed with 2. e4 g5 3. d4, when Black has lost time and weakened his kingside.
- Another offbeat try is Martin Appleberry's 1...Nh6!?. The idea is to meet 2. b3 with 2...e5, another deferred **From Gambit**, and 2.e4 with 2...d5, when 3.exd5 Qxd5 would result in a **Scandinavian Defense** where White's pawn is oddly placed on f4. However, 2.Nf3 avoids both of these lines.
- Another possible reply by Black is 1...Nc6. With this move, Black lays the support for the advance of the e-file pawn. The general sequence of moves that Black may opt for is g6, Bg7 and d6 and eventually advance the e-file pawn.

### 10.4.5 Popularity

Out of the twenty possible opening moves, 1.f4 ranks sixth in popularity in **ChessGames.com**'s database, behind 1.e4, 1.d4, 1.Nf3, 1.c4, and 1.g3.<sup>[15]</sup> It is less than one-twentieth

as popular as the mirror image **English Opening** (1.c4).<sup>[15]</sup> The move 1.f4 slightly weakens White's **king's position**.<sup>[16]</sup> **ChessGames.com**'s statistics indicate that the opening is not an effective way of preserving White's **first-move advantage**: as of February 2013, out of 3,872 games with 1.f4, White had won 30.7%, drawn 32%, and lost 37.7%, for a total score of 46.7%.<sup>[15][17]</sup> White scores much better with the more popular 1.e4 (54.25%), 1.d4 (55.95%), 1.Nf3 (55.8%), 1.c4 (56.3%), and 1.g3 (55.8%).<sup>[15]</sup>

According to the similar site **365chess.com**, which includes data for lower level games, as of August 2015, out of 20,010 games with 1.f4, White had won 35.1%, drawn 25%, and lost 39.9%, for a total score of 47.6%.<sup>[18]</sup> The five more popular openings are still substantially more successful for White: 1.e4 (53.15%), 1.d4 (54.8%), 1.Nf3 (55.4%), 1.c4 (54.65%), and 1.g3 (54.9%).<sup>[18]</sup>

### 10.4.6 See also

- **List of chess openings**
- **List of chess openings named after people**

### 10.4.7 Notes

- [1] “Having forgotten familiar openings, I commenced adopting KBP for first move, and finding it led to highly interesting games out of the usual groove, I became partial to it.” —Henry Bird (1873, entering match play after a six year absence from chess); Hooper and Whyld (1987), p. 32.
- [2] Hooper and Whyld (1992), p. 40.
- [3] de Firmian (2008), p. 732.
- [4] “The chess games of Lars Karlsson”. **Chessgames.com**. Retrieved 2012-09-07.
- [5] “The chess games of Henrik Danielsen”. **Chessgames.com**. 2010-07-26. Retrieved 2012-09-07.
- [6] Taylor (2005), p. 182.
- [7] Taylor (2005), pp. 150–51.
- [8] Taylor (2005), pp. 149–52.
- [9] Taylor (2005), pp. 135–45.
- [10] Palliser (2006), p. 124.
- [11] Taylor (2005), pp. 202–03.
- [12] Taylor (2005), p. 210.
- [13] Taylor (2005), pp. 214–16.
- [14] Edward Winter, 'The Swiss Gambit' (1998).

- [15] Opening Explorer. ChessGames.com. Retrieved on 2009-02-06.
- [16] Adorján (1998), p. 27.
- [17] White's overall winning percentage is calculated by taking the percentage of games won by White and adding half of the percentage of drawn games, in this case 32.8 plus half of 25.3.
- [18] <http://www.365chess.com/opening.php>

### 10.4.8 References

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- Palliser, Richard (2006). *Beating Unusual Chess Openings*. Gloucester Publishers. ISBN 978-1-85744-429-2.
- Taylor, Timothy (2005). *Bird's Opening: Detailed Coverage of an Underrated and Dynamic Choice for White*. Gloucester Publishers. ISBN 1-85744-402-7.
- A reference to the Bird's Opening was shown in the Television series "Monk" (Season 7, Episode 2, "Mr. Monk and the Genius") in which Monk seeks help in catching a chess master plotting to kill his wife from another young chess player, who is seen playing the Bird's Opening and making the comment "The Bird, as if I haven't seen that one before".

### 10.4.9 External links

- Opening Report. Bird, Williams Gambit: 1.f4 d5 2.e4 (47 games)
- Grand master with many OTB games in this opening, also same player's YouTube channel with many Bird's Opening lessons and live games

## 10.5 Benko's Opening

The **King's Fianchetto Opening** (also known as *Benko's Opening*, the *Hungarian Opening*, the *Barcza Opening*, and the *Bilek Opening*), is a chess opening characterized by the move:

1. g3

White's 1.g3 ranks as the fifth most popular opening move, but it is far less popular than 1.e4, 1.d4, 1.c4 and 1.Nf3. It is usually followed by 2.Bg2, fianchettoing the bishop. Nick de Firmian writes that 1.g3 "can, and usually does, transpose into almost any other opening in which White fianchettoes his king's bishop".<sup>[1]</sup> Included among these are the Catalan Opening, the King's Indian Attack and some variations of the English Opening. For this reason, the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* has no specific code devoted to 1.g3. The move itself is classified under A00,<sup>[2]</sup> however the numerous transpositional possibilities can result in various ECO codes.

While it has never been common, the Madras player Ghulam Kassim noted that "many of the Indian players commence their game in this way" in annotating the 1828 correspondence match between Madras and Hyderabad.<sup>[3]</sup> The hypermodern player Richard Reti played 1.g3 several times at Baden-Baden in 1925, with mixed results. 1.g3 received renewed attention after Pal Benko used it to defeat Bobby Fischer and Mikhail Tal in the 1962 Candidates Tournament in Curaçao, part of the 1963 World Championship cycle.<sup>[4]</sup> Benko used the opening the first eleven times he was White in the tournament.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 10.5.1 Sample lines

The following lines are examples of the kinds of positions which can develop from the King's Fianchetto opening. Move order is flexible in each case.

#### King's Indian Attack

King's Indian Attack

1.g3 d5 2.Bg2 Nf6 3.Nf3 c6 4.O-O Bg4 5.d3 Nbd7 6.Nbd2 e5 7.e4 - Réti Opening, King's Indian Attack, Yugoslav Variation (ECO A07)

#### English Opening

English Opening, Botvinnik System

1.g3 g6 2.Bg2 Bg7 3.c4 e5 4.Nc3 d6 5.d3 f5 6.e4 Nf6 7.Nge2 Nc6 8.O-O O-O 9.Nd5 - English Opening, Botvinnik System (ECO A26)

### 10.5.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 10.5.3 Notes

- [1] *Batsford's Modern Chess Openings*, 15th Edition (2008), Nick De Firmian
- [2] *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings, Volume A, Fourth Edition*. Chess Informant.
- [3] Gulam Kassim, *Analysis of the Muzio Gambit and Match of Two Games at Chess between Madras and Hyderabad*, Madras, 1829
- [4] Mednis, Edmar (1994). *How Karpov Wins*. Courier Dover Publications.
- [5] Timman, Jan (2005). *Curaçao 1962: The Battle of Minds that Shook the Chess World*. New in Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-139-3.

### 10.5.4 References

- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.

## 10.6 Zukertort Opening

The **Zukertort Opening** is a chess opening named after Johannes Zukertort that begins with the move:

1. Nf3

Sometimes the term "Réti Opening" is used to describe the opening move 1.Nf3,<sup>[1]</sup> although most sources define the Réti more narrowly as the sequence 1.Nf3 d5 2.c4.<sup>[2]</sup>

A flank opening, it is the third most popular of the twenty legal opening moves White has, behind only 1.e4 and 1.d4.<sup>[3][4][5]</sup>

The move has been described by Edmar Mednis as a "perfect and flexible opening"<sup>[6]</sup> and by others such as Aron Nimzowitsch as "certainly the most solid move, whereas moves such as 1.e4 and 1.d4 are both 'committal' and 'compromising'."<sup>[7]</sup> The game can transpose into a large number of other openings which usually start with 1.e4, 1.d4, or 1.c4. In most games, 1.Nf3 transposes into another opening. If Black is not careful, there is the risk of running unprepared into a highly theoretical opening, e.g.

after 1.Nf3 c5 White can play 2.e4 leading to the mainline **Sicilian Defense**. Other common transpositions are to various lines of the **Queen's Gambit Declined** (after e.g. 1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 Nf6 3.c4) or the **Catalan Opening** (after e.g. 1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 d5 3.Bg2 e6 4.0-0 Be7 5.c4).<sup>[6]</sup>

The main independent lines which usually start with 1.Nf3 are the **Réti Opening** (1.Nf3 d5 2.c4) and the **King's Indian Attack** (where White plays 1.Nf3, 2.g3, 3.Bg2, 4.0-0, and 5.d3, though not always in that order). By playing 1.Nf3 White has prevented Black from playing 1...e5, and many players who want to play the **English Opening** but avoid the reversed Sicilian lines beginning with 1.c4 e5 opt to start the game with 1.Nf3 instead.<sup>[6]</sup>

In the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings*, Zukertort Openings are classified in the coding series A04 - A09. 1...d5 is under A06-A09, 1...Nf6 is under A05, and any other Black move is under A04.

### 10.6.1 Continuations

The Black responses which are given one or more chapters in the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) are given below, ranked in order of popularity.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### 1...Nf6

Like White's move, Black's move is non-committal as to opening. 2. d4 is identical to 1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 (see **Queen's Pawn Game**). 2. c4 is a common start for the **English Opening** or it may be brought back to the **Queen's Gambit Declined** 2. g3 is a common start for the **King's Indian Attack**.

#### 1...d5

Black stakes a claim to the center. White has many transpositional options. 2. d4 is again the same as 1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 (see **Queen's Pawn Game**). 2. g3 is the **King's Indian Attack**. 2. c4 is the **Reti Opening** or **English Opening**.

#### 1...c5

Black invites White to play 2. e4, transitioning into the **Sicilian Defense**, or 2. c4, the **Symmetrical Defense** of the **English Opening**.

#### 1...g6

White can play 2. c4 for the **English Opening**, 2. e4 for the **Sicilian Defense**, 2. g3 for the **King's Indian Attack**, or 2. d4 for the **King's Indian Defense**.

### 1...f5

After 1...f5, 2. d4 is the **Dutch Defense**. 2. e4 borrows ideas from the **Staunton Gambit**.

### 10.6.2 See also

- **List of chess openings**

### 10.6.3 Further reading

- Djuric, Stefan (2010). *Chess Opening Essentials, Volume 4- 1.Nf3*. New in Chess. ISBN 978-90-5691-308-3.

### 10.6.4 References

- [1] "Reti Opening (A04)". Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2009-04-04.
- [2] Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992). *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- [3] "Opening Explorer". Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2009-04-04.
- [4] "Online Chess Database". ChessBase. Retrieved 2009-04-04.
- [5] "Chess Opening Explorer". 365chess.com. Retrieved 2009-04-04.
- [6] Mednis, Edmar (June 1990). "Move orders in the opening: The Modern Master's Tool". *Chess Life* (United States Chess Federation): 14–16.
- [7] Keene, Raymond (1999). *Aron Nimzowitsch - Master of Planning*. Batsford. p. 170. ISBN 0-7134-8438-1.
- [8] "Opening explorer for 1.Nf3".

## 10.7 Réti Opening

The **Réti Opening** is a hypermodern chess opening whose *traditional* or *classic method* begins with the moves:

1. Nf3 d5
2. c4

White plans to bring the d5-pawn under attack from the flank, or entice it to advance to d4 and undermine it later. White will couple this plan with a kingside fianchetto (g3

and Bg2) to create pressure on the light squares in the center.

The opening is named after **Richard Réti** (1889–1929), an untitled **Grandmaster** from Czechoslovakia. The opening is in the spirit of the **hypermodernism** movement that Réti championed, with the center being dominated from the wings rather than by direct occupation.

1.Nf3 develops the **knight** to a good square, prepares for quick **castling**, and prevents Black from occupying the center by 1...e5. White maintains flexibility by not committing to a particular central **pawn structure**, while waiting to see what Black will do. But the Réti should not be thought of as a single opening sequence, and certainly not a single opening move, but rather as an opening *complex* with many variations sharing common themes.

In the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO), Réti Opening is classified as codes A04–A09.

### 10.7.1 History

The New York International Chess Master's Tournament 1924  
ALAMAC HOTEL  
71st Street and Broadway, New York

Date 22/IV 1924

Opening

WHITE Mr. Reti		BLACK Mr. Capablanca	
White	Black	White	Black
1. Nf3	1. d5	1. Nf3	1. d5
2. c4	2. e6	2. c4	2. e6
3. g3	3. Lg7	3. g3	3. Lg7
4. Bg2	4. O-O	4. Bg2	4. O-O
5. Qe2	5. b6	5. Qe2	5. b6
6. O-O	6. Lb7	6. O-O	6. Lb7
7. d3	7. d6	7. d3	7. d6
8. Sd2	8. Sd7	8. Sd2	8. Sd7
9. Sd1	9. e5	9. Sd1	9. e5
10. Qc2	10. f5	10. Qc2	10. f5
11. Qf4	11. g5	11. Qf4	11. g5
12. a3	12. h6	12. a3	12. h6
13. Sd5	13. Sd5	13. Sd5	13. Sd5
14. e3	14. Sd7	14. e3	14. Sd7
15. d4	15. Lc8	15. d4	15. Lc8
16. Sc3	16. c5	16. Sc3	16. c5
17. Sc2	17. Sc7	17. Sc2	17. Sc7
18. Sc2	18. Sc7	18. Sc2	18. Sc7
19. Lxd4	19. Sc4	19. Lxd4	19. Sc4
20. Lxd4	20. Sc4	20. Lxd4	20. Sc4
21. Lxd4	21. Sc4	21. Lxd4	21. Sc4
22. Lxd4	22. Sc4	22. Lxd4	22. Sc4
23. Lxd4	23. Sc4	23. Lxd4	23. Sc4
24. Lxd4	24. Sc4	24. Lxd4	24. Sc4
25. Lxd4	25. Sc4	25. Lxd4	25. Sc4
26. Lxd4	26. Sc4	26. Lxd4	26. Sc4
27. Lxd4	27. Sc4	27. Lxd4	27. Sc4
28. Lxd4	28. Sc4	28. Lxd4	28. Sc4
29. Lxd4	29. Sc4	29. Lxd4	29. Sc4
30. Lxd4	30. Sc4	30. Lxd4	30. Sc4

Scoresheet of Réti–Capablanca, New York 1924

According to Réti the opening was introduced into master play in the early part of 1923.<sup>[1]</sup> Réti used the opening

most famously to defeat **José Raúl Capablanca**, the reigning **World Chess Champion**, in a game at the **1924 New York tournament**.<sup>[2]</sup> **Alexander Alekhine** played the Réti in the 1920s, but at that time almost any game that began with Nf3 and c4 by White was considered to be the Réti. Réti popularized these moves against all defenses in the spirit of **hypermodernism**, and as the opening developed it gained structure and a clearer distinction between it and other openings.

**Hans Kmoch** called the system of attack employed by Réti in the game Réti–Rubinstein, Carlsbad 1923,<sup>[3]</sup> “the Réti Opening” or “the Réti System”. **Savielly Tartakower** called the opening the “Réti–Zukertort Opening”, and said of 1.Nf3: “An opening of the past, which became, towards 1923, the opening of the future.”<sup>[4]</sup>

### 10.7.2 Classic method: 2.c4

In modern times the Réti refers only to the configuration Nf3 and c4 by White with ...d5 by Black, where White **fianchettoes** at least one bishop and does not play an early d4.<sup>[5]</sup>

After 2.c4 (ECO code A09), Black’s choices are:

- 2...e6 or 2...c6 (holding the d5-point)
- 2...dxc4 (giving up the d5-point)
- 2...d4 (pushing the pawn)

If Black takes the pawn, then in the same manner as the **QGA**, 3.e3 or 3.e4 regain the pawn with a slight advantage to White—Black being left somewhat undeveloped. 3.Na3 and 3.Qa4+ are also good, and commonly played. This variety of White options limits the popularity of 2...dxc4.

### 10.7.3 Transpositions

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6  
1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.O-O O-O

After 2.c4 e6, White can play 3.d4 for the Queen’s Gambit Declined.

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.d4 to  
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3

3.g3 Nf6 is the Neo-Catalan Opening, also under English (e.g. 1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5). Here White can play 4.d4.

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.d4 to  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3

After 4.Bg2, Black may play ...Be7 or ...dxc4. With move 4...Be7, White can then play 5.d4.

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.d4 to  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 Be7 5.Bg2

This goes to the Closed Catalan, avoiding Open Catalan (except classical line).<sup>[5]</sup> Or else White can castle, then Black probably castles as well.

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.O-O O-O 6.d4 to  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 Be7 5.Bg2 O-O 6.O-O

With 4...dxc4 to 4.Bg2, White’s most common move is 5.Qa4+, and this will not correspond to a 1.d4 line.

After 2.c4 c6, White can play 3.d4 for the Slav Defense.

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.d4 to  
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3

After 2.c4 c6 3.e3 Nf6, White can play 4.d4 for the Slav Defense.

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 Nf6 4.d4 to  
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3

After 2.c4 c6 3.e3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6, White can play 5.d4 for the Semi-Slav Defense.

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.d4 to  
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 c6 5.e3

However, White can play 5.b3 instead.

### 10.7.4 See also

- **F flank opening**
- **List of chess openings**
- **List of chess openings named after people**
- **Zukertort Opening**
- **Réti Opening, King’s Indian Attack**

### 10.7.5 References

- [1] Schiller, Eric (1988). *How to Play the Réti*. Coraopolis, Pennsylvania: Chess Enterprises, Inc. ISBN 978-0-931462-78-8.
- [2] Richard Reti vs Jose Raul Capablanca, New York 1924
- [3] Richard Reti vs Akiba Rubinstein, Karlsbad 1923
- [4] Tartakower, Savielly; du Mont, Julius (1975). *500 Master Games of Chess (1952)*. Dover Publications. p. 636. ISBN 0-486-23208-5.
- [5] *Modern Chess Openings*, 15th edition, by Nick de Firmian, ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7, p. 718

### 10.7.6 Further reading

- Dunnington, Angus (1998). *Easy Guide to the Reti Opening*. Cadogan. ISBN 978-1-85744-518-3.
- Davies, Nigel (2004). *The Dynamic Reti*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-352-3.

# Chapter 11

## Irregular Openings

### 11.1 Irregular chess opening

**Irregular openings** are chess openings with an unusual or rare first move by White. These openings are:

- 1.a3 – Anderssen’s Opening
- 1.a4 – Ware Opening
- 1.b4 – Sokolsky Opening, also known as Polish or Orangutan Opening
- 1.c3 – Saragossa Opening
- 1.d3 – Mieses Opening
- 1.e3 – Van ’t Kruijs Opening
- 1.f3 – Barnes Opening, also known as Gedult’s Opening
- 1.g4 – Grob’s Attack
- 1.h3 – Clemenz Opening, or Basman’s Attack
- 1.h4 – Desprez Opening, or Kadas Opening
- 1.Na3 – Durkin Opening, also known as Durkin’s Attack or the Sodium Attack
- 1.Nc3 – Dunst Opening
- 1.Nh3 – Amar Opening, also known as Paris Opening
- 1.g3 – Benko’s Opening
- 1.b3 – Larsen’s Opening

If White plays a regular opening and Black responds in an unconventional way, the opening is not categorized A00. For instance, 1.e4 a6 is classified as B00 (King’s Pawn Game).

#### 11.1.1 See also

- Open Game – 1.e4 e5
- Semi-Open Game – 1.e4 other
- Closed Game – 1.d4 d5
- Semi-Closed Game – 1.d4 other
- Flank opening – 1.c4, 1.Nf3, 1.f4, and others
- List of chess openings
- *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*

#### 11.1.2 References

Because these openings are not popular with chess players, the standard opening references (see chess opening and Chess theory#Opening theory) do not cover them in detail.

- Schiller, Eric (2003). *Unorthodox Chess Openings*. Cardoza. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.
- Benjamin, Joel; Schiller, Eric (1987). *Unorthodox Openings*. Macmillan Publishing Company. ISBN 0-02-016590-0.
- Tamburro, Pete (August 2009). “A Brief Chess Opening Glossary”. *Chess Life for Kids*: 8–9.

The above openings are all categorized under the ECO code A00. Openings that are not “irregular” comprise:

- 1.e4 – King’s Pawn Game
- 1.d4 – Queen’s Pawn Game
- 1.c4 – English Opening
- 1.Nf3 – Réti Opening or Zukertort Opening
- 1.f4 – Bird’s Opening

### 11.1.3 External links

- Unusual Openings
- Chess Archaeology: Openings classified under ECO A00

## 11.2 Anderssen's Opening

**Anderssen's Opening** is a chess opening defined by the opening move:

1. a3

Anderssen's Opening is named after unofficial **World Chess Champion** Adolf Anderssen, who played it three times<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> in his 1858 match against **Paul Morphy**. While Anderssen was defeated decisively in the match, the games he opened with this novelty scored 1½/3 (one win, one loss, one draw).

As Anderssen's Opening is not commonly played, it is considered an **irregular opening**. The move is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

### 11.2.1 Discussion

This opening move does little for development or control of the center. In some cases, White can transpose the game to an opening where 1.a3 might have been useful, but using a tempo on such a move already on move one seems premature. In fact, this opening is based on the idea that White is playing with the black pieces, but he has the move 1.a3 already played. If a game starts 1.a3 e5 2.e4 Nf6 3.Nc3, Black cannot proceed in **Ruy Lopez**-fashion, and if Black plays 3...Bc5, then 4.Nf3 puts Black into the Two Knights' Defence and White's a3 precludes many possibilities.

Anderssen's Opening is not a very constructive move for White, more a **waiting move**. Some players may enjoy the psychological value of such a move, however, or believe it will help them against an opponent with a superior knowledge of opening theory.

Among the more common Black responses to Anderssen's Opening are:

- 1...d5, which makes a straightforward claim on the center;
- 1...g6, which prepares to fianchetto the bishop to g7 (since developing the bishop to b4 is unlikely) where it puts pressure on the slightly weakened queenside squares;

- 1...e5 is also possible, but White can then play 2.c4, leading to a kind of **Sicilian Defence** with colors reversed, where a pawn on a3 can be useful. Another approach is 2.e4 Nf6 3.Nc3, transposing to **Mengarini's Opening**.

### 11.2.2 Use

A modern proponent of the move is Croatian **International Master** Dr. Zvonko Krecak.<sup>[4]</sup> In March 2010 the then world number one Magnus Carlsen played the opening in the blindfold game against Vassily Ivanchuk at the Amber chess tournament. Carlsen later lost the game.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 11.2.3 Named variations

- 1.a3 g6 2.g4 (Anderssspike)
- 1.a3 e5 2.h3 d5 (Creepy Crawly Formation)
- 1.a3 a5 2.b4 (Polish Gambit)

### 11.2.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 11.2.5 References

#### Notes

- [1] Anderssen vs Morphy, Paris 1858
- [2] Anderssen vs Morphy, Paris 1858
- [3] Anderssen vs Morphy, Paris 1858
- [4] Dr. Zvonko Krecak games at ChessGames.com
- [5] Carlsen vs Ivanchuk, Nice 2010

#### Bibliography

- Angus Dunnington (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.
- Eric Schiller (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. p. 48. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.
- Benjamin, Joel; Schiller, Eric (1987). *Unorthodox Openings*. Macmillan Publishing Company. ISBN 0-02-016590-0.

## 11.3 Ware Opening

The **Ware Opening** (or **Meadow Hay Opening**) is an uncommon **chess opening** for White beginning with the move:

1. a4

It is named after U.S. chess player **Preston Ware**, who often played uncommon openings. The Ware is considered an **irregular opening**, so it is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

### 11.3.1 Opening idea

The Ware Opening attacks the b5-square and prepares to bring the a1-rook into the game. The b5-square is non-essential and if Black plays 1...e5, the f8-bishop prevents the development of the white rook for the moment. The reply 1...e5 also gains space for Black in the center, a typical objective of most openings but one completely ignored by the Ware Opening. Noting all this, the Ware Opening is normally seen played only by players completely new to chess.

An experienced player using the Ware Opening will usually meet a response of 1...d5 or 1...e5 with 2.d4 or 2.e4, respectively, since a reversed **Scandinavian** or **Englund Gambit** would be unsound here. At some later point the move a5 will be played, followed by Ra4 (as Ra3?? invites ...Bxa3 Nxa3 with a definite advantage for Black).

In the 2012 World Blitz Championship, 1.a4 was employed as a little joke by **Magnus Carlsen** against **Teimour Radjabov**, who during the blitz championship two years earlier had told him “Everyone is getting tired. You might as well start with 1.a4 and you can still beat them.” The game soon turned into a sort of **Four Knights Game** where Carlsen finally prevailed.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 11.3.2 Variations

There are several named variations of the Ware Opening. The best known of these are:

- 1...e5 2.h4 – the **Crab Variation**. This does nothing to help White, but instead weakens his position even more.
- 1...e5 2.a5 d5 3.e3 f5 4.a6 – the **Ware Gambit**.
- 1...b6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nd7 – the **Cologne Gambit**.
- 1...b5 2.axb5 Bb7 – the **Wing Gambit** of the Ware Opening.
- 1...a5 – the rarely seen **Symmetric Variation**.

### 11.3.3 See also

- **Corn Stalk Defense** – sometimes known as the “Ware Defense”
- **Preston Ware**
- **List of chess openings**
- **List of chess openings named after people**

### 11.3.4 Notes

- [1] “Grischuk wins 2nd World Blitz title in Astana”. ChessVibes. 10 July 2012. Retrieved 11 July 2012.

### 11.3.5 References

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.
- Eric Schiller (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. pp. 506–508. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.

## 11.4 Sokolsky Opening

The **Sokolsky Opening** (also known as the **Orangutan** or **Polish**) is an uncommon **chess opening** that begins with the move:

1. b4

According to various databases, out of the twenty possible first moves from White, the move 1.b4 ranks ninth in popularity.<sup>[1]</sup> It is considered an **irregular opening**, so it is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO).

### 11.4.1 Details

The opening has never been popular at the top level, though a number of prominent players have employed it on occasion (for example, **Richard Réti** against **Abraham Speijer** in **Scheveningen 1923** and **Boris Spassky** against **Vasily Smyslov** in the **1960 Moscow–Leningrad match**). Soviet

player **Alexei Pavlovich Sokolsky** (1908–69) wrote a monograph on this opening in 1963, *Debyut 1 b2–b4*.

Perhaps its most famous use came in the game **Tartakower** versus **Maróczy**, in the **New York 1924 chess tournament** on March 21, 1924.<sup>[2]</sup> The name “Orangutan Opening” originates from that game: the players visited the **Bronx Zoo** the previous day, where Tartakower consulted an orangutan named Susan, and she somehow indicated, Tartakower insisted, that he should open with b4. Also Tartakower noted that the climbing movement of the pawn to b5 reminded him of the orangutan. In that particular game, Tartakower came out of the opening with a decent position, but the game was drawn.<sup>[3][4]</sup> Alekhine, who played in the tournament and wrote a book on it, said that 1.b4 was an old move, and that the problem is that it reveals White’s intentions, before White knows what Black’s intentions are.<sup>[5]</sup>

The opening is largely based upon tactics on the **queenside** or the f6- and g7-squares. Black can respond in a variety of ways: For example, Black can make a claim on the centre (which White’s first move ignores) with 1...d5 (possibly followed by 2.Bb2 Qd6, attacking b4 and supporting e7–e5),<sup>[6]</sup> 1...e5 or 1...f5. Less ambitious moves like 1...Nf6, 1...c6 (called the **Outflank Variation**, preparing ...Qb6 or ...a5), and 1...e6 are also reasonable. Rarer attempts have been made with 1...a5 or 1...c5. Black’s reply 1...e6 is usually followed by ...d5, ...Nf6 and an eventual ...c5. After 1.b4 e5 it is normal for White to ignore the attack on the b-pawn and play 2.Bb2, when 2...d6, 2...f6, and 2...Bxb4 are all playable. After 1...a5 White will most likely play 2.b5 and take advantage of Black’s queenside weakness. Black’s 1...c5 is much sharper and more aggressive and is normally used to avoid theory. After the capture Black will generally place pressure on the c5-square and will develop an attack against White’s weak queenside structure.

### 11.4.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 11.4.3 Named Variations

1.b4 c5 is the **Birmingham Gambit**. 1.b4 c6 is the **Outflank Variation**. 1.b4 c6 2.Bb2 a5 3.b5 cxb5 4.e4 is the **Schuhler Gambit**. 1.b4 d5 2.Bb2 c6 3.a4 is the **Myers Variation**. 1.b4 e5 2.a3 is the **Bugayev attack**. 1.b4 e5 2.Bb2 c5 is the **Wolferts Gambit**. 1.b4 e5 2.Bb2 f6 3.e4 Bxb4 is the **Tartakower Gambit** or **Schiffler-Sokolsky**. 1.b4 e5 2.Bb2 f6 3.e4 Bxb4 4.Bc4 Nc6 5.f4 Qe7 6.f5 g6 is the **Brinckmann Variation**. 1.b4 Na6 is the **Bucker Defense**. 1.b4 Nc6 is the

**Grigorian Variation**. 1.b4 Nf6 2.Bb2 g6 3.g4 is the **Polish Spike**. 1.b4 Nh6 is the **Karniewski** or **Tübingen Variation**.

### 11.4.4 References

#### Notes

- [1] See for example **ChessBase**, **365chess opening explorer**, and **ChessGames.com opening explorer**
- [2] “**Savielly Tartakower vs Geza Maroczy**”. Chessgames.com. Retrieved 2008-01-20.
- [3] Weinreb, Michael. “**Kings of New York**”. Gotham Books. 2007
- [4] Danelishen, Gary; M. “**The Final Theory of Chess**”. Phillimore Press 2008 ISBN 978-0981567709
- [5] Alekhine, Alexander. “**New York 1924**”. Russell Enterprises, Inc. 2009 p. 64 ISBN 978-1888690484
- [6] Martin, Andrew (2004). “**How To Meet The Polish & Grob**”. www.jeremysilman.com.

#### Bibliography

- Hooper, David; Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.
- Eric Schiller (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. ISBN 1-58042-072-9. p. 354-357
- Yury Lapshun; Nick Conticello (2008). *Play 1b4!: Shock your opponents with the Sokolsky*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-560-2.
- Jerzy Konikowski und Marek Soszynski: *The Sokolsky Opening 1.b4 in Theory & Practice*. Russell Enterprises, Milford USA 2009, ISBN 978-1-888690-65-1

### 11.4.5 External links

- ECO A00: Polish (Sokolsky) opening
- 1. b4 variations and games by Marek Trokenheim (Marek’s 1.b4 Encyclopaedia)
- Sokolsky
- Opening Report. Birmingham Gambit: 1.b4 c5 (148 games)
- Opening Report. Tartakower Gambit: 1.b4 e5 2.Bb2 f6 3.e4 Bxb4 (783 games)

## 11.5 Saragossa Opening

The **Saragossa Opening** (or **Hempel's Opening**) is a chess opening defined by the opening move:

1. c3

Since White usually plays more aggressively in the opening, the Saragossa is considered an **irregular opening**, classified as A00 by the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

### 11.5.1 History

This opening became popular in the Saragossa chess club (Zaragoza, Spain) in 1919. The next year club member José Juncosa analyzed the opening in *Revista del Club Argentino*.<sup>[1]</sup> In 1922 a theme tournament requiring the players to open with 1.c3 was arranged in Mannheim with three participants, Siegbert Tarrasch, Paul Leonhardt and Jacques Mieses, which Tarrasch won.

### 11.5.2 Basics

The opening of 1.c3 seems at first to be an unambitious move. It opens a diagonal for the queen, but it makes only a timid claim to the center. It prepares to play d4, but White could simply have played that move immediately. Also, the pawn on c3 has the apparent disadvantage of taking the c3-square away from the knight.

It is not a terrible move, however, because it is likely to transpose to many solid systems, including a reversed Caro-Kann Defence or Slav Defense (but with an extra tempo for White); the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined, after 1.c3 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.cxd4 d5; to a solid but passive type of Queen's Pawn Game after 1.c3 Nf6 2.d4 or 1.c3 d5 2.d4; or to a reversed Scandinavian Defense after 1.c3 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.Qxd4!? Nc6 4.Qa4; as well as the Ponziani and Center Game openings, to name just a few.

Black has a number of responses, the most common (and effective) being 1...d5, 1...e5, and 1...Nf6. After 1...d5, White can essay the Plano Gambit, 2.e4?!, in effect an unusual response to the Scandinavian Defense. After 2...dxe4, 3.Qa4+ recovers the pawn, but Black gets quick development with 3...Nc6 4.Qxe4 Nf6 5.Qc2 e5. Also reasonable is 1...f5, when 2.d4 transposes to a Dutch Defense where White has played the passive move c3.

The reply 1...c5 is also playable, but gives White more opportunity than other moves to transpose to standard openings where he may have a small advantage. The move 1...c5 2.e4 transposes to the Alapin Variation of the Sicilian Defence. The sequence 1...c5 2.d4 is also possible, when

2...cxd4 (2...e6 3.e4 d5, transposing to a French Defence after 4.e5 or 4.exd5, is also possible) 3.cxd4 d5 transposes to a regular Exchange Variation of the Slav Defense (usually reached by 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5), which gives White a slight advantage.

The move 1...Nc6 is also possible, as it transposes to the 1.Nc3 system (with colors reversed), where Black embarked on a rather dubious plan with c6 and d5. After 2.d4 d5, Black seems to be holding the admittedly unusual position without particular difficulties.

### 11.5.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places

### 11.5.4 Notes

[1] Hooper & Whyld 1992, p. 354

### 11.5.5 References

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992), *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2 ed.), Oxford University Press, p. 354, ISBN 0-19-280049-3
- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.
- Eric Schiller (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. p. 329. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.

### 11.5.6 External links

- 825 Games at Chess.com

## 11.6 Mieses Opening

The **Mieses Opening** is a chess opening that begins with the move:

1. d3

The opening is named after the German-British grandmaster Jacques Mieses. It is considered an **irregular opening**, so it is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO).

### 11.6.1 Description

White's 1.d3 releases his c1-bishop and makes a modest claim for the centre, but since it does not stake out as large a share of the centre as 1.d4 does, it is not a popular opening move. Of the twenty possible first moves for White, it ranks tenth in popularity. Nevertheless, since 1...d6 is playable by Black against any opening move from White,<sup>[1]</sup> it is playable by White as well. Black has many reasonable responses, such as 1...e5, 1...d5, 1...c5, 1...Nf6, and 1...g6.

The most famous use of this opening was in the third game in the rematch between Garry Kasparov and the Deep Blue computer in 1997.<sup>[2]</sup> Kasparov believed that the computer would play the opening poorly if it had to rely on its own skills rather than on its opening book. The game was drawn.<sup>[3]</sup> It had been previously used by David Levy in a prize match against Cray Blitz, where White won.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 11.6.2 Illustrative game

Position after 29...Nc6

Garry Kasparov–Deep Blue, game 3, May 1997<sup>[5]</sup>  
 1.d3 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c4 Nf6 4.a3 d6 5.Nc3 Be7 6.g3 0-0 7.Bg2 Be6 8.0-0 Qd7 9.Ng5 Bf5 10.e4 Bg4 11.f3 Bh5 12.Nh3 Nd4 13.Nf2 h6 14.Be3 c5 15.b4 b6 16.Rb1 Kh8 17.Rb2 a6 18.bxc5 bxc5 19.Bh3 Qc7 20.Bg4 Bg6 21.f4 exf4 22.gxf4 Qa5 23.Bd2 Qxa3 24.Ra2 Qb3 25.f5 Qxd1 26.Bxd1 Bh7 27.Nh3 Rfb8 28.Nf4 Bd8 29.Nfd5 Nc6 (see diagram) 30.Bf4 Ne5 31.Ba4 Nxd5 32.Nxd5 a5 33.Bb5 Ra7 34.Kg2 g5 35.Bxe5+ dxe5 36.f6 Bg6 37.h4 gxh4 38.Kh3 Kg8 39.Kxh4 Kh7 40.Kg4 Bc7 41.Nxc7 Rxc7 42.Rxa5 Rd8 43.Rf3 Kh8 44.Kh4 Kg8 45.Ra3 Kh8 46.Ra6 Kh7 47.Ra3 Kh8 48.Ra6 ½–½

### 11.6.3 Named Variations

1.d3 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 is the Venezolana. 1.d3 e5 is the Reversed Rat. 1.d3 g6 2.g4 is the Spike Deferred or the Myers Spike Attack.

### 11.6.4 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 11.6.5 References

- [1] The book *An Explosive Chess Opening Repertoire for Black* is devoted to giving "Black a complete opening repertoire

with the opening move 1...d6." Jouni Yrjölä and Jussi Tella, *An Explosive Chess Opening Repertoire for Black*, Gambit Publications Ltd., 2001, p. 6. ISBN 1-901983-50-1.

- [2] Kasparov vs. Deep Blue rematch, Game 3 (www.chessbase.com)  
 [3] *Chess Life*, Special Summer Issue 1997.  
 [4] Need 4 games Cray Blitz-Levy 1984 Computer Chess Club archives at stmintz.com  
 [5] Kasparov Vs Deep Blue, Game 3, May 6, 1997 (www.chesscorner.com)

### Bibliography

- Angus Dunnington (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.
- David Hooper and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.). Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Benjamin, Joel; Schiller, Eric (1987). *Unorthodox Openings*. Macmillan Publishing Company. pp. 10–11. ISBN 0-02-016590-0.

## 11.7 Van 't Kruijs Opening

The **Van't Kruijs<sup>[1]</sup> Opening** (Dutch pronunciation: [van ət 'kroëys]) is a chess opening defined by the move:

1. e3

It is named after the Amsterdam player Maarten van't Kruijs (1813–85) who won the sixth Dutch championship in 1878. As this opening move is rarely played, it is considered an irregular opening, and thus it is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO).

The opening 1.e3 is not popular according to ChessBase; it ranks eleventh in popularity out of the twenty possible first moves. It releases the king's bishop, and makes a modest claim of the centre, but the move is somewhat passive. The queen's bishop's development is somewhat hindered by the pawn on e3, and White usually wants to take more than a modest stake of the centre.

Although not very aggressive for a first move, play may transpose to lines of the English Opening (c2–c4), Queen's Pawn Game (d2–d4), or reversed French Defence (delayed d2–d4) or reversed Dutch Defence (f2–f4) positions.

The Van't Kruijs Opening is not a common choice for **grandmasters**, but its ability to transpose into many different openings explains its attraction for some people such as the **Czech** grandmaster **Pavel Blatny**, **Aron Nimzowitsch**<sup>[2]</sup> and **Bent Larsen**. **Garry Kasparov** has used the move against the **Fritz** chess engine to get it “out of book”.

### 11.7.1 Named variations

- 1.e3 d5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.a3 e5 4.f4 exf4 5.Nf3 (**Keoni-Hiva Gambit**)
- 1.e3 e5 2.c4 d6 3.Nc3 Nc6 4.b3 Nf6 (**Amsterdam Attack**)
- 1.e3 e5 2.Nc3 d5 3.f4 exf4 4.Nf3 (**Ekolu Variation**)
- 1.e3 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 exf4 4.Nf3 (**Alua Variation**)
- 1.e3 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.f4 exf4 4.Nf3 (**Akahi Variation**)
- 1.e3 e5 2.Bc4 d5 3.Bb3 (**Bouncing Bishop Variation**)

### 11.7.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 11.7.3 References

[1] Also spelled **Van't Kruys**.

[2] **Aron Nimzowitsch** playing 1.e3 at Chessgames.com

### 11.7.4 Further reading

- **Hooper, David** and **Kenneth Whyld** (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- **Dunnington, Angus** (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.

### 11.7.5 External links

- Interactive chessboard showing the Amsterdam Attack variation
- Short biography of **Maarten van't Kruijs**
- The chess games of **Maarten Van't Kruijs**

## 11.8 Barnes Opening

**Barnes Opening** (or **Gedult's Opening**) is a chess opening where White opens with:

1. f3

The opening is named after **Thomas Wilson Barnes** (1825–74), an **English** player who had an impressive eight wins over **Paul Morphy**, including one game where Barnes answered 1.e4 with 1...f6, known as **Barnes Defense**.

It is considered an **irregular opening**, so it is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO).

### 11.8.1 Strategy

Of the twenty possible first moves in **chess**, author and grandmaster **Edmar Mednis** argues that 1.f3 is the *worst*.<sup>[1]</sup> The move does exert influence over the central square e4, but the same or more ambitious goals can be achieved with almost any other first move. The move 1.f3 does not develop a piece, opens no lines for pieces, and actually hinders the development of White's **king knight** by denying it its most natural square f3. It also weakens White's kingside pawn structure, opens the e1–h4 diagonal against White's uncastled king, and opens the g1–a7 diagonal against White's potential kingside **castling** position.<sup>[2]</sup>

Since 1.f3 is a poor move, it is not played often. Nonetheless, it is probably not the rarest opening move. After 1.f3 e5 some players even continue with the nonsensical 2.Kf2, which is sometimes called the **Fried Fox Attack**, **Wandering King Opening**, **The Hammerschlag**, **Tumbleweed**, the **Pork Chop Opening**, or the **Half Bird** as it is often called in the United Kingdom, due to its opening move f3 being half that of the f4 employed in the Bird Opening. One example of this is the game **Simon Williams** versus **Martin Simons** in the last round of the British Championship 1999, where Williams had nothing to play for.<sup>[3]</sup> Also played is 2.e4, called the **King's Head Opening**.

Despite its obvious deficiencies, 1.f3 does not lose the game for White. Black can secure a comfortable advantage by the normal means – advancing central pawns and rapidly developing pieces to assert control over the **center**.

If Black replies 1...e5, the game might proceed into a passive line known as the Blue Moon Defence. It usually occurs after the moves 1.f3 e5 2.Nh3 d5 3.Nf2 (avoiding 3...Bxh3 4.gxh3 weakening the **kingside**) Nf6 4.e3 Nc6 5.Be2 Bc5 6.0-0 0-0. White has no stake in the center, but hopes to make a hole to break into.

If White plays poorly and leaves too many lines open against his king after 2.Kf2, he might be quickly checkmated. One example: 1.f3 d5 2.Kf2 e5 (Black places two pawns in the center to prepare for quick development) 3.e4 Bc5+ 4.Kg3 Qg5#.

### 11.8.2 Fool's Mate

Barnes Opening can lead to **Fool's mate**, 1.f3 e5 2.g4 Qh4 mate. Of all of White's legal moves on his second move, only one allows mate in one, while another, 2.h3, allows mate in two.

### 11.8.3 A transposition

David Gedult, a cult hero of the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit community, often played 1.f3 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.Nc3. This is sometimes called the Gedult Opening. Play often transposes to the **Blackmar-Diemer Gambit** proper, with 3...exf3 4.Nxf3 Nf6 5.d4.

### 11.8.4 See also

- **Fool's Mate**
- **Barnes Defense**
- **List of chess openings**
- **List of chess openings named after people**

### 11.8.5 References

#### Notes

[1]

[2] Larsen, Bent (1977). *Lærebok i sjakk*. Dreyer. ISBN 82-09-01480-3.

[3] **Opening Lanes** Garry Lane, Chesscafe.com

#### Bibliography

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3. OCLC 34618196.
- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4. OCLC 44556403.

- Eric Schiller (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. p. 51. ISBN 1-58042-072-9. OCLC 51747780.
- Benjamin, Joel; Schiller, Eric (1987). *Unorthodox Openings*. Macmillan Publishing Company. ISBN 0-02-016590-0.

## 11.9 Grob's Attack

**Grob's Attack** is an unconventional chess opening where White immediately moves the king knight's pawn two squares ahead:

1. g4

### 11.9.1 Discussion

The opening takes its name from **Swiss International Master Henri Grob** (1904–1974) who analyzed it extensively and played hundreds of **correspondence games** with it. In Grob's newspaper column analysis of this opening, he referred to it as the **Spike Opening**, a name which still enjoys limited usage. Other early references used the name **Ahlhausen's Opening**, after Carl Ahlhausen (1835–1892) of **Berlin**, one of the first to play 1.g4. Savielly Tartakower sometimes played this opening in **simultaneous exhibitions** and called it the **Genoa** or **San Pier D'Arena Opening**, after the city and suburb of **Genoa** where he first used it. In the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia** 1.g4 is called **Fric's Opening**, and in other parts of the world it is called **Kolibri's Opening**.

It is considered an **irregular opening**, so it is classified under the A00 code in the **Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings**.

The Grob is generally considered inferior and is usually not employed in serious competition. International Master **John Watson** writes, "As far as I can tell, 1 g4 is competitive with 1 h4 for the honour of being White's worst first move. Against an informed or skilled opponent, it is simply masochistic."<sup>[1]</sup>

Nonetheless, International Master **Michael Basman** and Grandmaster **Spyridon Skembris** are advocates of the opening. It has a certain surprise value, and the average player is unlikely to know how to refute it and more likely to get overconfident and make mistakes. Moreover, the lack of theory along this line may negate the repertoire of an experienced opponent. Intuitive play by White can lead Black into dangerous traps. Many of these traps rely on Black's replying with 1...d5, attacking the pawn with his queen's bishop. After 2.Bg2 Bxg4!?, White has an attack after 3.c4

and eventually Qb3, aiming at the weakened squares d5 and b7, an attack that may well be worth a pawn.

After 1. g4 d5 2.Bg2 Bxg4!? 3.c4

After 3.c4 d4 4.Bxb7 Nd7

Romford Countergambit, after 5. Bxa8 Qxa8 6. f3 d3!

Black is not obliged to give White these opportunities. After 1...e5, Black can take aim at the h4-square, left weak by White's pawn advance. 2.Bg2 h5 will force a weakening of White's pawn structure. 2.d3 (intending to answer 2...h5 with 3.g5) or 2.h3 can be answered by 2...Ne7 with the threat of ...Ng6 followed by ...Nf4 or ...Nh4, disrupting White's kingside fianchetto. (Martin 2004)

The Keene defense, reached through the moves 1. g4 d5 2. h3 e5 3. Bg2 c6.

Another frequently used setup for White in the Grob is 1. g4, 2. h3, and 3. Bg2. A Black counter-setup might be 1... d5, 2... e5, and 3... c6 (these moves may be played in any order), which, if used in conjunction with an eventual ...e4, negates White's King's Bishop's influence over the center.

A key element of the Grob is deploying the king's bishop on g2 and having it rule the diagonal. In order to further this goal, White must keep the center clear of pawns. This leads to frequent "tearing at the center" with c4 often being White's third move.

Due to the unusual pawn structure White attains by playing g4 and c4 so early in the game, there is frequently little advantage to castling. Play often devolves into a wild and wide-open game, with a definitive advantage usually resolving itself in the first 20 moves.

In response to Grob's Attack, Black may advance the king's pawn, perhaps hoping to follow up with Fool's mate if White plays 2.f4?? or 2.f3??. Good responses would be 2.Bg2 (dominating the light-squared center diagonal) or c4, the English Variation, preparing Nc3 to solidify White's control of d5.

## 11.9.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

## 11.9.3 Notes

- [1] John Watson, *Mastering the Chess Openings, Volume 4*, Gambit Publications, 2010, p. 275. ISBN 978-1-906454-19-7.

## 11.9.4 References

- Michael Basman (1991). *The Killer Grob*. Cadogan. ISBN 0-08-037131-0.
- Bill Wall (1988). *Grob's Attack*. Chess Enterprises. ISBN 0-931462-86-X.
- Angus Dunnington (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.
- p. 201-210 Eric Schiller (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.
- Claude Bloodgood (1976). *The Tactical Grob*. Chess. Retrieved 2008-06-30.

## 11.9.5 External links

- Martin, Andrew (2004). "How To Meet The Polish & Grob". [www.jeremysilman.com](http://www.jeremysilman.com).

## 11.10 Clemenz Opening

The **Clemenz Opening** is a chess opening beginning with the move:

1. h3

This opening is named after Hermann Clemenz (1846–1908), an Estonian player. It is considered an irregular opening, so it is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

### 11.10.1 Discussion

Like Anderssen's Opening, 1.a3, 1.h3 is a time-wasting move, as it makes no claim on the central squares, nor does it aid development. It also leads to a slight weakening of White's kingside, albeit not as severely as Grob's Attack (1.g4) or Barnes Opening (1.f3). Since there is no need for White to make such a time-wasting first move, it is among the rarest of the 20 possible first moves. Nevertheless, IM Michael Basman has experimented with 1.h3, usually following it up with 2.g4 (transposing to the Grob), or 2.a3 followed by a quick c2–c4, a line that has been dubbed the "Creepy Crawly".

Black has a number of playable responses, the most common being 1...d5 and 1...e5, which stake out a claim for

central space. Another response, 1...b6 (or even 1...b5), intends to **fianchetto** a bishop to pressure White's weakened pawns, and forestall a White kingside expansion with g2–g4.

1...f5 is probably not Black's best reply to 1.h3, since White can then play 2.d4, transposing to a sharp line against the **Dutch Defense** once tried by **Viktor Korchnoi**.

### 11.10.2 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 11.10.3 References

- Benjamin, Joel; Schiller, Eric (1987). *Unorthodox Openings*. Macmillan Publishing Company. pp. 102–03. ISBN 0-02-016590-0.
- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion To Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.
- Eric Schiller (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. p. 108. ISBN 1-58042-072-9.

## 11.11 Desprez Opening

The **Desprez Opening** is a chess opening characterized by the opening move:

1. h4

The opening is named after the French player Marcel Desprez. Like a number of other rare openings, 1.h4 has some alternate names such as “**Kadas Opening**”, “**Anti-Borg Opening**”, “**Samurai Opening**”, and “**Reagan's Attack**”. Gabor Kadas is a Hungarian player. According to Eric Schiller's *Unorthodox Chess Openings*, the last name is because 1.h4 is “thoroughly unmotivated and creates weaknesses with only vague promises of future potential”, a political gibe against **Ronald Reagan**.

As the Desprez Opening is very rare, it is considered an irregular opening, so it is classified under the A00 code in the Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings.

### 11.11.1 Assessment

Like 1.a4, the **Ware Opening**, 1.h4 is an irrelevant pawn move which does nothing in the fight over central space, and does very little for development. The only piece released is the **rook**, and this piece is usually not developed by moving it to h3. In addition, 1.h4 weakens White's **kingside**. For all of these reasons, 1.h4 is among the rarest of the twenty possible first moves for White.

Black usually responds by grabbing the center with 1...d5 or 1...e5, and simple and sound development by 1...Nf6 is also possible. However, 1...g6, intending to **fianchetto** Black's bishop on g7, is rare because White can undermine Black's pawn structure with 2.h5, making 1.h4 seem like a logical move.

Grandmaster **David Bronstein** once remarked that he knew of a Russian player who always opened 1.h4 and always won. His point was that after 1. ...e5 2.g3 d5 3.d4! exd4 4.Qxd4 Nc6 5.Qd1 Nf6 6.Nh3! Be7 7.Nf4 0-0 8.Bg2 the f4 knight is well placed and White has a good position.<sup>[1]</sup> However, Black does not have to be so cooperative.

### 11.11.2 Named Variations

There are five named variations in the Desprez Opening:

- The **Koola-Koola** continues 1...a5.
- The **Wulumulu** continues 1...e5 2. d4
- The **Crab Variation** or **Crab Opening** continues 1...any 2. a4.
- The **Borg Gambit** continues 1...g5.
- The **Symmetric Variation** continues 1...h5.

### 11.11.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 11.11.4 Notes

- [1] McDonald, Neil (2001). *Concise Chess Openings*. Everyman. p. 301. ISBN 1-85744-297-0.

### 11.11.5 References

- Eric Schiller (2002). *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.). Cardoza. ISBN 1-58042-072-9. p. 237

- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.

## 11.12 Durkin Opening

The **Durkin Opening** (also known as the **Durkin Attack** or the **Sodium Attack**) is a rarely played chess opening beginning with the move:

1. Na3

The Durkin Opening is named for Robert James Durkin (1923–?) of New Jersey. The name “Sodium Attack” comes from the algebraic notation 1.Na3, as *Na* is the chemical symbol for the element sodium.

### 11.12.1 Assessment

This awkward development of the queen’s knight does little to utilize White’s advantage of the first move. From a3 the knight does not influence the center or possess much activity. It is likely that White will move this knight again soon, perhaps by playing c4 and either recapturing on c4 (e.g. 1...d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nxc4) or playing Nc2. If this is White’s plan, it is stronger to play 1.c4 (the English Opening). As such, this opening is probably most valuable as a way to avoid opening preparation. On the other hand, there are better ways to avoid an opponent’s opening preparation, for example by developing the b1-knight to c3. This is a very good opening for sub 1300 players, because they usually don’t expect anything other than d5 or e5.

### 11.12.2 Named Variations

The Durkin Opening has several named variations:

- 1...e5 2.Nc4 Nc6 3.e4 f5 (Durkin’s Gambit)
- 1...e5 2.d3 Bxa3 3.bxa3 d5 4.e3 c5 5.Rb1 (Celadon Variation)
- 1...g6 2.g4 (Chenoboskian Variation)

### 11.12.3 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

## 11.12.4 References

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld. “Durkin Opening.” *Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. 117.
- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.
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## 11.13 Dunst Opening

The **Dunst Opening** is a chess opening where White opens with the move:

1. Nc3

This fairly uncommon opening may have more names than any other: it is also called the **Heinrichsen Opening**, **Baltic Opening**, **van Geet’s Opening**, **Sleipnir Opening**, **Kotrč’s Opening**, **Meštrović Opening**, **Romanian Opening**, **Queen’s Knight Attack**, **Queen’s Knight Opening**, **Millard’s Opening**, **Knight on the Left**, and (in German) **der Linksspringer**.

### 11.13.1 Origin of names

The names Heinrichsen and Baltic derive from Lithuanian chess player Arved Heinrichsen (1876–1900). The opening was analyzed and played by the New York master Ted A. Dunst (April 11, 1907 New York City – December 18, 1985 Lambertville, New Jersey), giving the opening its most popular name in the United States. The Dutch International Master and correspondence grandmaster Dirk Daniel (“Dick D.”) van Geet (March 1, 1932 – April 29, 2012) frequently played 1.Nc3, so it is often called the van Geet’s Opening in the Netherlands. The appellation Sleipnir seems to come from Germany. Sleipnir is Odin’s (*Wotan* in German) magical eight-legged horse, and chess knights are horses with up to eight different possible moves each turn. Czech Jan Kotrč (1862–1943), editor and publisher of the magazine *České Listy*, said the opening was analyzed by English players. Zvonimir Meštrović (b. October 17, 1944) is a Slovenian International Master who often adopts this opening. Tim Harding refers to it as the

“Queen’s Knight Attack” (Harding 1974:8). National Master Hugh Myers called it “Millard’s Opening” after Henry Millard (1824–91), a blind correspondence chess player who drew with the opening in a simultaneous exhibition against Joseph Henry Blackburne. Blackburne later played the opening himself against Josef Noa in the London 1883 international chess tournament (Myers 2002:24–25).<sup>[1]</sup> The German FIDE Master Harald Keilhack in his 2005 book on the opening states that it has also been referred to as the Romanian Defense, and that he prefers the neutral appellation “Der Linksspringer” or, in English, “the Knight on the Left” (Keilhack 2005:7).

### 11.13.2 General remarks

The opening move 1.Nc3 develops the knight to a good square where it attacks the central e4 and d5 squares. Although quite playable, 1.Nc3 is rarely seen; it is only the eighth most popular of the 20 possible first moves, behind 1.e4, 1.d4, 1.Nf3, 1.c4, 1.g3, 1.f4, and 1.b3. As of February 6, 2009, out of the over 500,000 games in ChessGames.com’s database, only 644—about 1 out of every 780—begins with 1.Nc3.<sup>[2]</sup> The third-ranking 1.Nf3 is 66 times as popular.<sup>[2]</sup> Some very strong correspondence chess players employ 1.Nc3 frequently, and it is occasionally seen over-the-board.

The reasons for 1.Nc3’s lack of popularity are that it does not stop Black from occupying the center (while 1.Nf3 prevents 1...e5, 1.Nc3 does not prevent 1...d5 because the d-pawn is guarded by the queen), and it blocks White’s c-pawn from moving, thus making it impossible to play c3 or c4 (which are often desirable moves) without moving the knight first. In addition, after 1...d5, the knight’s position is unstable because Black may attack it with ...d4. Although 1.Nc3 develops a piece to a good square (unlike 1.Na3 or 1.Nh3), and does not weaken White’s position (unlike, e.g., 1.g4 or 1.f3) or waste time (unlike, e.g., 1. c3), the above-stated drawbacks make it an inferior way of attempting to exploit White’s first-move advantage. Of the 644 games with 1.Nc3 in ChessGames.com’s database, White won 34.8%, drew 23.9%, and lost 41.3%, for a total winning percentage of only 46.75%.<sup>[2][3]</sup> White scores much better with the more popular 1.e4 (54.25%), 1.d4 (55.95%), 1.Nf3 (55.8%), 1.c4 (56.3%), and 1.g3 (55.8%).<sup>[2]</sup>

### 11.13.3 Possible continuations

#### 1...d5

This is one of Black’s best replies, occupying the center and underscoring the unsettled position of White’s knight.

White can prevent 2...d4 by playing 2.d4 himself, but he then obtains a somewhat inflexible position in the Queen’s Pawn Game with his knight blocking the c-pawn (Kaufman 2004:469, 473). Also possible is 2.Nf3 (and if 2...d4, 3.Ne4), a sort of Black Knights’ Tango with an extra move (Harding 1974:10). A third line is 2.e3, which Keilhack calls “the Müller game,” when White hopes for 2...e5 (other moves are also playable, of course) 3.Qh5!?, e.g. 3...Nc6 4.Bb5 Qd6 5.d4 exd4 6.exd4 Nf6 7.Qe5+! Be6?! (Keilhack recommends 7...Kd8!! 8.Bxc6 bxc6 9.Nf3 Bg4) 8.Bf4 0-0-0 9.Bxc6 Qxc6? 10.Nb5!, when White wins at least a pawn (Keilhack 2005:307–11).

White’s most common response to 1...d5 is 2.e4. This is the same position as 1.e4 d5 2.Nc3, an obscure branch of the Scandinavian Defense. Black has five plausible responses to 2.e4: 2...e6 and 2...c6 transpose to the French and Caro–Kann Defenses, and 2...Nf6 to a variation of Alekhine’s Defence. The move 2...d4 gives Black a spatial advantage, which White may work to undermine along the lines of hypermodernism. Keilhack writes, “2...d4 is chosen either by somewhat naive players who are attracted by the fact that Black wins time and space ... or by strong players who are aware of the strategic risks but are striving for a complex battle.” (Keilhack 2005:44) He considers the Van Geet Attack, 2...d4 3.Nce2 followed by Ng3, to be “the core of the 1.Nc3 opening,” “a fully independent entity which strives for early knight activity on the kingside,” usually with Ng3, Nf3, Bc4 or Bb5, 0-0, and d3 (Keilhack 2005:44). Alternative lines for White include the unusual 3.Nb1!?, with which van Geet once drew Spassky, and, after 3.Nce2, playing a sort of King’s Indian Attack with d3, g3, Bg2, f4, Nf3, and 0-0 – a line Keilhack calls the “Lizard Attack” (Keilhack 2005:125).

The fifth alternative, 1...d5 2.e4 dxe4, leads to more open play. After 3.Nxe4, Black has a number of playable moves, including 3...e5, 3...Nc6, 3...Bf5, 3...Nd7, 3...Nf6, and even 3...Qd5!?, when 4.Nc3 transposes to the Scandinavian Defense (Keilhack 2005:131, 144, 146, 158, 172, 176). After 3...e5, White’s thematic move is 4.Bc4, when several of Black’s plausible moves lead to disaster, e.g. 4...Be7? 5.Qh5! and White wins at least a pawn after 5...g6 6.Qxe5 or 5...Nh6 6.d3; or 4...Nf6? 5.Ng5! Nd5 and now 6.d4!, 6.Qf3!, and 6.Nxf7!? Kxf7 7.Qf3+ are all possible, with positions similar to the line of the Two Knights Defense beginning 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Nxd5?! (Keilhack 2005:133–34). However, 3...e5 4.Bc4 Nc6! is playable (Keilhack 2005:135–43).

International Master Richard Palliser, in his 2006 book *Beating Unusual Chess Openings*, recommends 1...d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.Nxe4 Nd7 for Black. He explains, “Black doesn’t attempt to refute White’s opening or to gain lots of space (as with 2...d4), but simply settles for sensible development. The position should be compared to both a Caro–

**Kann Defense** and a French Rubinstein. Black will hope to demonstrate that he has gained from the omission of an early ...c6 or ...e6, while White will generally omit d4, preferring a setup with Bc4 and d3” (Palliser 2006:143). After 4.Bc4, the natural move 4...Ngf6!? leads to very sharp and unclear play if White responds with 5.Bxf7+!? Kxf7 6.Ng5+ Kg8 7.Ne6 Qe8 8.Nxc7 (Keilhack 2005:158–63) (Palliser 2006:144–46). More solid is 4...e6 (!!) – Keilhack) (Keilhack 2005:164–70) (Palliser 2006:144–48).

### 1...c5

1...c5 is often played by devotees of the **Sicilian Defence**, into which the game often transposes, either immediately after 2.e4 or at a later point. Alternatively, White can remain in independent 1.Nc3 lines, at least for the time being, with 2.Nf3 followed by 3.d4, which gives Black a large choice of possible responses. One line Palliser recommends for Black is 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 (3.e4 transposes to a Sicilian) cxd4 4.Nxd4 d5!? (seizing the center) 5.Bg5 Nbd7! 6.e4 (more critical than the passive 6.e3?!) dxe4 7.Qe2 e6!? 8.0-0 Be7 9.Nxe4 0-0 when “White doesn’t appear to have any advantage” (Palliser 2006:154–56).

If White chooses to transpose to standard Sicilian lines, the fact that his knight is committed to c3 may be a disadvantage in certain lines. The Closed Sicilian, commonly reached by 1.e4 c5 2.Nc3, without an early d4 by White, gives Black few **theoretical difficulties** (de Firmian 2008:346). If White instead chooses to play an Open Sicilian with 2.e4 and 3.Nf3 or Nge2, followed by d4, the knight’s placement on c3 prevents White from playing the **Maróczy Bind** with c4. This makes the **Accelerated Dragon Variation** with 2...Nc6 and 3...g6 particularly attractive (Gallagher 1994:146). Black may also stop White’s intended d4 by playing an early ...e5, e.g. 1.Nc3 c5 2.e4 Nc6 3.Nf3 e5 (Gallagher 1994:151–55) or 3.Nge2 e5 (Gallagher 1994:148–51).

### 1...Nf6

Grandmaster Larry Kaufman recommends 1...Nf6, intending to meet 2.e4 with 2...e5 or 2.d4 with 2...d5 (Kaufman 2004:484). Keilhack writes that “1...Nf6 is one of the most unpleasant replies for the 1.Nc3 player. Black keeps all options open, he can choose between a central (...d5, possibly followed by ...c5) and an Indian (...g6, ...Bg7) setup. ... Among the many possible [second] moves [for White], none really stands out.” (Keilhack 2005:338). The most straightforward moves for White are 2.d4 and 2.e4, but neither promises White a significant advantage. After 2.d4, 2...d5 leads to the **Richter-Veresov Attack** (3.Bg5) or another type of **Queen’s Pawn Game** where White, hav-

ing blocked his c-pawn, has little chance for advantage (Kaufman 2004:469, 473). After 2.e4, Black can again play 2...d5 with a type of **Alekhine’s Defense**; or 2...d6 3.d4 g6 with a **Pirc Defense** or 3...e5 with a **Philidor’s Defense**. The most solid response to 2.e4 is 2...e5, leading to a **Vienna Game** or, after 3.Nf3 Nc6, to a **Four Knights Game**—neither of which offers White an appreciable advantage (Kaufman 2004:364–65) (de Firmian 2008:121). Keilhack also analyzes a number of offbeat possibilities, including 2.b3, 2.Nf3, 2.f4 (an unusual form of **Bird’s Opening** that Keilhack calls the “Aasum System”), 2.g3, and even the gambit 2.g4?! Palliser writes that none of the alternatives to 2.e4 “really convince or should greatly trouble Black over the board” (Palliser 2006:142).

### 1...e5

This natural move is playable, but dangerous if Black does not know what he is doing. One of the main lines is 1...e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4, with poor chances for Black, continued by 3...exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Bg5. Keilhack writes that this variation “occurs rather often and offers excellent chances for an early knockout” by White and that “only two [moves] (5...Bb4 and 5...Bc5) do not immediately ruin Black’s game” (Keilhack 2005:26). (See, e.g., the **Dunst–Gresser** game given below.)

## 11.13.4 Transpositions to other openings

The move 1.Nc3 is considered an **irregular opening**, so it is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (also see *List of chess openings*). Transpositions to more common openings are possible, many of which are discussed in the preceding section. In addition, 1.Nc3 d5 2.e4 reaches a position in the **Scandinavian Defense**; 1.Nc3 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.e4 leads to a **Scotch Four Knights Game**; 1.Nc3 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.e4 Bc5 or 3...g6 gives a **Three Knights Game**; 1.Nc3 Nc6 2.d4 d5 3.e4, or 2...e5 and now 3.d5 Nce7 4.e4 or 3.dxe5 Nxe5 4.e4, yields a **Nimzowitsch Defense**; and 1.Nc3 b6 2.e4 Bb7 3.d4 is an **Owen’s Defense**. Transposition to a **Dutch Defense** is also possible after 1.Nc3 f5 2.d4, but Keilhack considers 2.e4! more dangerous, intending 2...fxe4 3.d3, a reversed **From’s Gambit** (Keilhack 2005:369–70). Black alternatives to 2...fxe4 include 2...d6, when 3.d4 transposes to the **Balogh Defense**; and 2...e5?!, when 3.Nf3 produces a **Latvian Gambit**, but 3.exf5!, as in a game between Steinitz and Sam Loyd, may be stronger.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 11.13.5 Sample games

- Here is a quick victory by Dunst himself against nine-time U.S. Women's Champion **Gisela Gresser**. It illustrates the problems that White's rapid development can pose if Black is not careful:

Dunst–Gresser, New York 1950

**1. Nc3 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 exd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Bg5 d5?** (better is 5...Bb4 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.Qd4 Be7 8.e4 0-0 9.Bd3 h6 10.Bf4 d5 11.0-0 dxe4 and the game was soon **drawn** in Ekebjærg–Oim, 14th World Correspondence Chess Championship) **6. e4! Be7 7. Bb5 Bd7 8. exd5 Nxd5 9. Nxd5 Bxg5 10. Qe2+ Ne7?** (Losing at once. 10...Be7 11.0-0-0 is also very awkward. Although it's unpleasant, Black should have tried 10...Kf8.) **11. Qe5! Bxb5?** (11...0-0! 12.Qxg5 Nxd5 13.Qxd5 c6 and Black wins a piece back) **12. Nxc7+ Kf8 13. Nde6+** (now 13...fxe6 14.Ne6+ wins Black's queen) **1–0** (notes based on those by Tim Harding)<sup>[5]</sup>

- Van Geet, another champion of the opening, routs his opponent almost as quickly:

Van Geet–Guyt, Paramaribo 1967

**1. Nc3 d5 2. e4 d4 3. Nce2 e5 4. Ng3 g6 5. Bc4 Bg7 6. d3 c5 7. Nf3 Nc6 8. c3 Nge7 9. Ng5 0-0** (Now White has a surprising attacking move.) **10. Nh5! Bh8** (10...gxh5 11.Qxh5 h6 12.Nxf7 is disastrous; 10...Na5 11.Nxg7 Nxc4! 12.dxc4 Kxg7 is forced.) **11. Qf3 Qe8 12. Nf6+ Bxf6 13. Qxf6 dxc3** (This loses by force. Again it was necessary to harass the bishop at c4 by ... Na5.) **14. Nxf7 Rxf7 15. Bh6 1–0** (notes based on those by Eric Schiller at Chessgames.com)<sup>[6]</sup>

### 11.13.6 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after people

### 11.13.7 References

- [1] Blackburne–Noa, London 1883. ChessGames.com. Retrieved on 2009-02-06.
- [2] Opening Explorer. ChessGames.com. Retrieved on 2009-02-06.
- [3] White's overall winning percentage is derived by taking the percentage of games won by White and adding half of the

percentage of drawn games, in this case 34.8 plus half of 23.9.

- [4] Steinitz–Lloyd, London 1867

- [5] Who Dunst It?

- [6]

### Bibliography

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- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1996), *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.), Oxford: Oxford University, ISBN 0-19-280049-3
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- Palliser, Richard (2006), *Beating Unusual Chess Openings*, Everyman Chess, ISBN 1-85744-429-9
- Schiller, Eric (2002), *Unorthodox Chess Openings* (Second ed.), Cardoza, pp. 280–81, 471–82, ISBN 1-58042-072-9
- Wall, Bill (2002), *1. Nc3 Dunst Opening*, Chess Enterprises, ISBN 0-945470-48-7

### 11.13.8 External links

- Harding, Tim (June 1998), *Who Dunst It*, ChessCafe.com

## 11.14 Amar Opening

The **Amar Opening** (also known as **Paris Opening**, **Drunken Knight Opening**, or **Ammonia Opening**) is a chess opening defined by the move:

1. Nh3

This opening is sometimes known as the Ammonia Opening, since NH<sub>3</sub> is the chemical formula for ammonia. The Parisian amateur Charles Amar played it in the 1930s. It was probably named by Tartakower who used both names for this opening, although the chess author Tim Harding has jokingly suggested that “Amar” is an acronym for “Absolutely mad and ridiculous” (Winter 1996, p. 89).

Since 1.Nh3 is considered an irregular opening, it is classified under the A00 code in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

### 11.14.1 Discussion

Like the Durkin Opening, White develops a knight to a rim square without having much reason to do so, and such a development is quite awkward. (One of Siegbert Tarrasch's proverbs is “A knight on the rim is dim”.) Nevertheless, developing the king's knight prepares kingside castling, and therefore 1.Nh3 is a more common move than 1.Na3.

Black's most common reply is 1...d5 which threatens 2...Bxh3, ruining White's kingside pawn structure. White usually plays 2.g3 to prevent this, and Black can then take a grip of the center with 2...e5.

### 11.14.2 Named variations

There are several named variations in the Amar Opening. The most well known one is known as the **Paris Gambit**: 1.Nh3 d5 2.g3 e5 3.f4? Bxh3 4.Bxh3 exf4. In the Paris Gambit, White allows Black a firm grip on the center, and also gives up material. Therefore, the gambit is considered dubious. The only named variation in the Paris Gambit is the **Grant Gambit**: 5.0-0 fxg3 6.hxg3. This variation was first played by Savielly Tartakower against Andor Lilienthal in Paris, 1933.

There is also one named subvariation in the 1...e5 variation, known as the **Krazy Kat**: 1.Nh3 e5 2.f3 d5 3.Nf2.

### 11.14.3 References

- Dunnington, Angus (2000). *Winning Unorthodox Openings*. Everyman Chess. ISBN 978-1-85744-285-4.

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1996). *The Oxford Companion To Chess* (second ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
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### 11.14.4 External links

- FM Eric Schiller's analysis

# Chapter 12

## Traps

### 12.1 Fool's mate

For other uses, see [Fool's mate \(disambiguation\)](#).  
“Fool's mate” is sometimes used to mean [Scholar's mate](#).

In [chess](#), **Fool's Mate**, also known as the “Two-Move Checkmate”, is the [checkmate](#) in the fewest possible number of moves from the start of the game. A prime example consists of the moves:

1. f3 e5
2. g4?? Qh4#

resulting in the position shown. (The pattern can have slight variations: [White](#) might play 1.f4 instead of 1.f3 or move the [g-pawn](#) first, and [Black](#) might play 1...e6 instead of 1...e5.)

#### 12.1.1 Details

Fool's Mate received its name because it can only occur if [White](#) plays extraordinarily weakly (i.e. [foolishly](#)). Even among rank beginners, the mate almost never occurs in practice.

Teed vs. Delmar, 1896

After 6...Rh6? [White](#) mates in two moves.

The same basic mating pattern can also occur later in the game. For instance, a well-known trap in the [Dutch Defence](#) occurred in the game Frank Melville Teed vs. [Eugene Delmar](#), 1896:<sup>[1]</sup>

1. d4 f5 2. Bg5 h6 3. Bf4 g5 4. Bg3 f4

It seems that [Black](#) has won the [bishop](#), but now comes ...

5. e3

Threatening Qh5#, a basic Fool's Mate.

- 5... h5 6. Bd3?!

6.Be2 is probably better, but the move played sets a trap.

- 6... Rh6??

Defending against Bg6#, but ...

7. Qxh5+!

[White](#) sacrifices his queen to draw the [black](#) rook away from its control of g6.

- 7... Rxh5 8. Bg6#

A similar mate can occur in [From's Gambit](#): 1. f4 e5 2. g3? exf4 3. gxf4?? Qh4#

More generally, the term *Fool's Mate* is applied to all similar mates early in the game. For example, in 1. e4 g5 2. d4 f6?? 3. Qh5#, the basic Fool's Mate pattern is the same: a player advances his f- and g-pawns, which permit the enemy [queen](#) to mate along the unblocked diagonal. One such Fool's Mate is widely reported to have occurred in a possibly apocryphal 1959 game between Masefield and Trinkka<sup>[2]</sup> which lasted just three moves: 1. e4 g5 2. Nc3 f5?? 3. Qh5#<sup>[3][4][5][6][7]</sup>

Even more generally, the term *Fool's Mate* is used in [chess variants](#) to mean the shortest possible mate, especially those which bear a resemblance to the orthodox chess Fool's Mate. For example, Fool's Mate in the variant [Progressive chess](#) is: 1. e4 2. f6 g5?? 3. Qh5#

Greco vs. NN

Final position after 8.Bg6#

### 12.1.2 Similar traps

A similar trap occurred in a game published by **Gioachino Greco** in 1625:

**1. e4 b6 2. d4 Bb7 3. Bd3 f5? 4. exf5 Bxg2?  
5. Qh5+ g6 6. fxg6 Nf6??**

6...Bg7 would have prolonged the game, as the move opens a flight square for the king at f8. White still wins with 7.Qf5! Nf6 8.Bh6 Bxh6 9.gxh7 Bxh1 10.Qg6+ Kf8 11.Qxh6+ Kf7 12.Nh3, but much slower than in the game.<sup>[8]</sup>

**7. gxh7+! Nxh5 8. Bg6#**

### 12.1.3 See also

- Scholar's mate
- Checkmate patterns

### 12.1.4 References

- [1] Teed vs. Delmar
- [2] The names are also recorded as Mayfield or Mansfield and Trinks or Trent depending on the source consulted.
- [3] Mike Fox and Richard James (1993). *The Even More Complete Chess Addict*. Faber and Faber. p. 177.
- [4] Winter, Edward (2005). *Chess Facts and Fables*. McFarland & Co. pp. 253–254. ISBN 978-0-7864-2310-1.
- [5] Edward G. Winter (August 2006). "Chess Notes 4493. Short game".
- [6] Edward G. Winter (August 2006). "Chess Notes 4506. Short game (C.N. 4493)".
- [7] Averbakh, Yuri Lvovich; Beilin, Mikhail Abramovich (1972). Путешествие в шахматное королевство (in Russian). Fizkultura i sport. p. 227.
- [8] Lev Alburt (2011). *Chess Openings for White, Explained*. Chess Information Research Center. p. 509.

### 12.1.5 Further reading

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992), "Fool's Mate", *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.), Oxford University Press, ISBN 0-19-280049-3

## 12.2 Scholar's mate

In chess, **Scholar's Mate** is the **checkmate** achieved by the moves:

**1. e4 e5  
2. Qh5 Nc6  
3. Bc4 Nf6??  
4. Qxf7#**

The moves might be played in a different order or in slight variation, but the basic idea is the same: the queen and bishop combine in a simple mating attack on f7 (or f2 if Black is performing the mate).

Scholar's Mate is sometimes referred to as the "Four-Move Checkmate", although there are other ways to checkmate in four moves.

### 12.2.1 Avoiding Scholar's Mate

Unlike **Fool's Mate**, which rarely occurs at any level, games ending in Scholar's Mate are quite common among beginners. After **1. e4 e5 2. Qh5 Nc6 3. Bc4**, if Black continues **3... Nf6??** then White can end the game immediately with **4. Qxf7#**. However, Black can easily avoid the mate: either **3... Qe7** or **3... g6** defend against the threat. If White renews the Qxf7 threat after **3... g6 4. Qf3**, Black can easily defend by **4... Nf6** (see diagram), and develop the f8-bishop later via **fianchetto** (...Bg7).

White might also try this sequence of moves, starting from the **Bishop's Opening**: **1. e4 e5 2. Bc4 Bc5 3. Qh5** (threatening Scholar's Mate on f7) and now **3... Qe7!** (see diagram; 3...g6? instead would be a big mistake, allowing 4.Qxe5+ and 5.Qxh8) and Black is not only safe, but will attack the white queen later with ...Nf6. Alternatively, Black could have stopped White's plans early on by playing **2...Nf6** instead of **2...Bc5**.

### 12.2.2 Openings

Although a quick mate on f7 is almost never seen in play above beginner level, the basic idea underlying it—that the f7-square, defended only by Black's king, is weak and therefore a good target for early attack—is the motivating principle behind a number of chess openings. For example, after **1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6** (the **Two Knights Defense**), White's most popular continuation is **4. Ng5** attacking f7, which is awkward for Black to defend. The **Fried Liver Attack** even involves a sacrifice of the knight on f7.

The **Wayward Queen Attack** (1. e4 e5 2. Qh5?!) and **Napoleon Opening** (1. e4 e5 2. Qf3?!) are both aimed at threatening Scholar's Mate on the next move (3. Bc4). Although the Napoleon Opening is never seen in high-level competition, the Wayward Queen Attack has occasionally been tried in tournaments by **Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura** to achieve a practical middlegame for White.

### 12.2.3 Name in other languages

- In some languages, including Dutch, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish: *Shepherd's Mate*
- In Italian: *Barber's Mate*
- In Persian, Greek and Arabic: *Napoleon's Plan*
- In Russian: *Children's Mate*
- In Spanish: *Mate Pastor*
- In Latvian: *Shepherd's Mate* or *Children's Mate*
- In Polish (where **Fool's Mate** is known as *Scholar's Mate*), Danish, German, Croatian, Hungarian, Slovenian, Slovakian and Hebrew: *Shoemaker's Mate*
- In Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish: *School Mate*
- In Esperanto: *Stultula Mato* (**Fool's Mate**)

Scholar's Mate has also occasionally been given other names in English, such as *Schoolboy's Mate*--- which may be seen as better reflecting in modern English the sense of 'novice' which was the word *Scholar's* original connotation--- and *Blitzkrieg* (German for "lightning war", meaning a very short and quick engagement) (Kidder 1960).

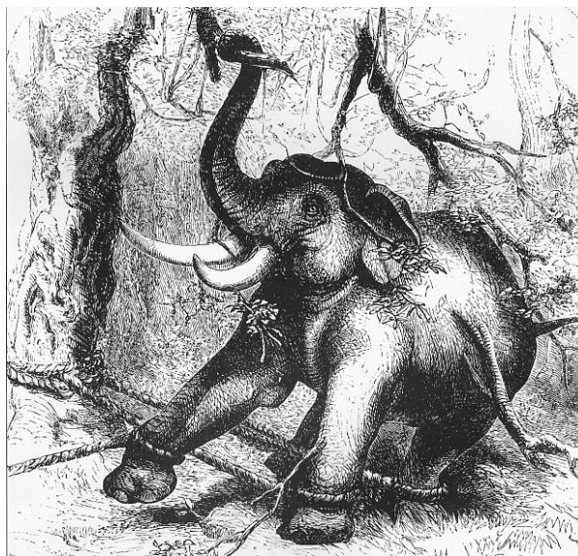
### 12.2.4 See also

- **Fool's Mate**
- Checkmate patterns

### 12.2.5 References

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## 12.3 Elephant Trap



*Falling into the Elephant Trap will cost White his queen's knight.*

In chess, the **Elephant Trap** is a faulty attempt by White to win a pawn in a popular variation of the **Queen's Gambit Declined**. This simple trap has snared thousands of players, generally amateurs.

The earliest recorded occurrence of the trap seems to be **Karl Mayet vs. Daniel Harrwitz, Berlin 1848**.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 12.3.1 The trap

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. Bg5 Nbd7

This opening sequence usually indicates that Black intends to play the **Cambridge Springs Defense** with 5.Nf3 c6 6.e3 Qa5, but it can also lead to the **Orthodox Defense** if Black plays ...Be7. (The Cambridge Springs had not yet been invented at the time of the Mayet–Harrwitz game.)

Black has set a trap; if White tries to win a pawn by ...

5. cxd5 exd5 6. Nxd5?? (first diagram)

White thinks that the black knight on f6 is pinned to the queen and cannot be moved.

6... Nxd5! 7. Bxd8 Bb4+ (second diagram)

Black regains the queen as White has only one legal move to get out of check.

**8. Qd2 Bxd2+**

Harrwitz played the equally good 8...Kxd8, intending 9...Bxd2+.

**9. Kxd2 Kxd8**

Black comes out a **minor piece** ahead.

**12.3.2 Notes**

[1] K. Mayet–D. Harrwitz, Berlin 1848 at Chessgames.com

**12.3.3 References**

- Barden, Leonard (1987). *Play Better Chess • Revised Edition*. Treasure Press. p. 24. ISBN 978-1850512318.

**12.4 Halosar Trap**

Black falls into the trap with 7...Bg4??

The **Halosar Trap** (named after Hermann Halosar) is a chess opening trap in the **Blackmar–Diemer Gambit**.

**12.4.1 Analysis****1. d4 d5 2. e4?!**

This is the start of the **Blackmar–Diemer Gambit**.

**2... dxe4 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. f3 exf3**

Now 5.Nxf3 is usual, but by capturing with the **queen**, White lays a trap. (This is the **Ryder Gambit**.)

**5. Qxf3?! Qxd4 6. Be3 Qb4?!**

Better is 6...Qg4. Black thinks that **castling** is prevented because of ...Bg4, but White castles anyway.

**7. 0-0-0 Bg4??** (see diagram)

Blundering into the trap.

**8. Nb5!!**

White threatens mate with 9.Nxc7#. The black queen cannot capture the **knight** because 8...Qxb5 9.Bxb5+ is **check**, gaining time for the white queen to escape the black Bg4's attack.

**8... Na6 9. Qxb7 Qe4**

Black lost even more quickly in Diemer–Halosar, Baden-Baden 1934, after 9...Rc8 10.Qxa6 1–0.

**10. Qxa6 Qxe3+**

Worse is 10...Bxd1 11.Kxd1 Rd8+ 12.Bd2 and White is winning, for example 12...Ng4 13.Nxc7+ Kd7 14.Qxa7.

**11. Kb1 Qc5** (diagram)

Position after 11...Qc5

**12. Nf3**

The White threat of 13.Qb7 wins the black a-pawn by force. With even **material** and a **passed a-pawn**, White will have a winning advantage (Burgess). Even stronger seems 12.Qb7! with the idea 12...Bxd1 13.Qxa8+ Kd7 14.Nc3 and White has a winning attack.

**12.4.2 References**

- Burgess, Graham (2009). *The Mammoth Book of Chess* (3rd ed.). Running Press. ISBN 978-0-7624-3726-9. p. 202-3

**12.5 Kieninger Trap**

The **Budapest Gambit** (or **Budapest Defence**) is a chess opening that begins with the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e5

Despite an early debut in 1896, the Budapest Gambit received attention from leading players only after a win as Black by **Grandmaster Milan Vidmar** over **Akiba Rubinstein** in 1918. It enjoyed a rise in popularity in the early 1920s, but nowadays is rarely played at the top level. It

experiences a lower percentage of **draws** than other main lines, but also a lower overall performance for Black.

After 3.dxe5 Black can try the *Fajarowicz variation* 3...Ne4 which concentrates on the rapid development of the pieces, but the most common move is 3...Ng4 with three main possibilities for White. The *Adler variation* 4.Nf3 sees White seeking a **spatial advantage** in the **centre** with his pieces, notably the important d5-square. The *Alekhine variation* 4.e4 gives White an important spatial advantage and a strong **pawn centre**. The *Rubinstein variation* 4.Bf4 leads to an important choice for White, after 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+, between 6.Nbd2 and 6.Nc3. The reply 6.Nbd2 brings a positional game in which White enjoys the **bishop pair** and tries to break through on the **queenside**, while 6.Nc3 keeps the **material** advantage of a pawn at the cost of a weakening of the white **pawn structure**. Black usually looks to have an aggressive game (many lines of which can shock opponents that do not know the theory) or cripple white's pawn structure.

The Budapest Gambit contains several specific **strategic** themes. After 3.dxe5 Ng4, there is a battle over White's extra pawn on e5, which Black typically attacks with ...Nc6 and (after ...Bc5 or ...Bb4+) ...Qe7, while White often defends it with Bf4, Nf3, and sometimes Qd5. In the 4.Nf3 variation the game can evolve either with Black attacking White's **kingside** with manoeuvres of rook lifts, or with White attacking Black's kingside with the push f2–f4, in which case Black reacts in the centre against the e3-pawn. In numerous variations the move c4–c5 allows White to gain space and to open prospects for his **light-square bishop**. For Black, the check Bf8–b4+ often allows rapid development.

### 12.5.1 History

In a *Chess Notes* feature article, Edward Winter showed that the origins of this opening are not yet entirely elucidated.<sup>[1]</sup> The first known game with the Budapest Gambit is Adler–Maróczy (played in **Budapest** in 1896). This game already featured some key aspects of the gambit, such as active play for the black pieces, and White making the typical mistake of moving the queen too early. As the player of the white pieces was not a strong player, the new opening went unnoticed apart from the local experts who had witnessed the game. The Hungarians István Abonyi, Zsigmond Barász and Gyula Breyer further developed the opening. Abonyi played it in 1916 against the Dutch surgeon Johannes Esser in a small tournament in Budapest. The Austrian player Josef Emil Krejci played it against Helmer in **Vienna** in 1917. Carl Schlechter published an optimistic analysis of the gambit in the *Deutsche Schachzeitung*.<sup>[2][3][4]</sup>

The first use of the opening against a world-class player



Tartakower, a practitioner of the Budapest Gambit

was at **Berlin** in April 1918, a double round-robin tournament with four players: Akiba Rubinstein, Carl Schlechter, Jacques Mieses and Milan Vidmar. Vidmar had to play Black in the first round against Rubinstein, then ranked the fourth best player in the world with a very **positional** style.<sup>[5]</sup> At a loss for what to play, he sought advice from his friend Abonyi, who showed him the Budapest Gambit and the main ideas the Hungarian players had found. Vidmar followed Abonyi's advice and beat Rubinstein convincingly in just 24 moves.<sup>[6]</sup> This victory so heartened Vidmar that he went on to win the tournament, while Rubinstein was so demoralised by this defeat that he lost another game against Mieses and drew a third one against Schlechter in the same opening.<sup>[2][7]</sup>

After this tournament, the gambit finally began to be taken seriously. Top players like Savielly Tartakower and Siegbert Tarrasch started to play it. Schlechter published in 1918 the monograph *Die budapester Verteidigung des Damengambits*,<sup>[8]</sup> which can be considered the first book on this opening. The gambit reached its peak of popularity (around five Budapest Gambits for every thousand games played) around 1920,<sup>[9]</sup> so much so that many White players adopted the move-order 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 to avoid it.<sup>[10][11]</sup>

The leading exponents of 1.d4 started to look for reliable

antidotes. **Alexander Alekhine** showed how White could get a strong attack with 4.e4 in his games against **Ilya Rabinovich** (Baden-Baden 1925) and **Adolf Seitz** (Hastings 1925–26). But a few weeks later a theme tournament on the Budapest Gambit was held, in Budapest, and the result was 14½–21½ in Black’s favor. Another tournament in **Semmering** the same year saw Alekhine losing to **Karl Gilg** in his pet line with White against the gambit, so that the e4-line had a mixed reputation.<sup>[10]</sup> Meanwhile, more positional plans were also developed for White. **Rubinstein** showed how White could get a small positional advantage with 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2, an assessment still valid today. The possibility 6.Nc3 was also considered attractive, as structural weaknesses were not valued as much as a material advantage of one pawn in those days. By the end of the 1920s, despite the invention of the highly original **Fajarowicz variation** 3...Ne4 in 1928, the Budapest Gambit was considered theoretically dubious.<sup>[12]</sup>

This assessment was left unchanged for decades, as few players at the highest level used the Budapest Gambit and information about games from lesser players could not easily be found. During that time, various responses were developed against the 4.Bf4 line; these included 4...g5, invented by **István Abonyi**, further developed by the masters **Bakonyi** and **Drimer**. The master **Kaposztas** showed that even when White succeeded in his positional plan, it only meant for Black a worse endgame with drawish tendencies.<sup>[notes 1]</sup> Two pawn sacrifices were also introduced in the variation with 6.Nbd2 (still in the 4.Bf4 line), based on pawn pushes d7–d6 or f7–f6 and a quick attack against b2.<sup>[13]</sup>

The Budapest Gambit saw a short-lived revival in 1984–85 when *Chess Informant* included three games (as many as in the previous fifteen years), all played at a high level of competition, and all won by Black.<sup>[14]</sup> But White players found reinforcements and even invented a line with 4.e3 and 5.Nh3.<sup>[15]</sup> In the 21st century, despite **Shakhriyar Mamedyarov**’s successful efforts to rehabilitate the line 4.Bf4 g5, the Budapest Gambit almost never appears at the highest level,<sup>[16][17]</sup> however **Richard Rapport** with black defeated **Gelfand** using the opening in round 2 of the 2014 Tata Steel Chess competition.

## 12.5.2 Performance

In the database of the website *ChessGames.com*, the Budapest Gambit scores 28.9% Black wins, 44.1% White wins and 27.1% draws. The percentage of draws is especially low compared to mainstream alternatives such as 2...e6 (43.7% draws) or 2...g6 (37% draws). This opening gives more chance to win for both opponents, although the percentage of Black wins is still lower than the alternative 2...c5. In the

main line 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 the percentage of Black wins already falls to 21.1%, lower than the main lines after 2...e6 or 2...g6.<sup>[18]</sup>

The Budapest Gambit has never been widely used as Black by the top-ten chessplayers. **Richard Réti** used it five times in the period 1919–26 when he was among the ten best players in the world,<sup>[19]</sup> but he scored only 1½ points.<sup>[20]</sup> **Savielly Tartakower** used it four times in 1928 when he was the eighth-best player in the world,<sup>[21]</sup> including thrice in one tournament (**Bad Kissingen** 1928) but he scored only ½ point against world-class opposition: **Bogoljubov** then ranked number four in the world,<sup>[22]</sup> **Capablanca** ranked number two,<sup>[23]</sup> and **Rubinstein** ranked number seven.<sup>[5][24]</sup> **Rudolf Spielmann** used it thrice in 1922–23 when he was about number 9–12 in the world,<sup>[25]</sup> with a win against **Euwe** but defeats against **Yates** and **Sämisch**.<sup>[26]</sup> **Nigel Short** played the gambit twice in the years 1992–93 when he was number 7–11,<sup>[27]</sup> scoring only ½ points against **Karpov** (then ranked number two<sup>[28]</sup>) and **Ivanchuk** (then ranked number three<sup>[29]</sup>).<sup>[30]</sup> Recently, **Mamedyarov** used it twice in 2004 (scoring 1½ with a win against **Van Wely**) when he was not already among the top-players, and six times in 2008 when he was about number 6–14; he scored five points with wins against former world champion **Kramnik** (then ranked number three<sup>[31]</sup>), and grandmasters **Tkachiev** and **Eljanov**, but all six games took place in rapid or blitz events.<sup>[32]</sup>

Nicolas Giffard summarises the modern assessment of the Budapest Gambit:<sup>[33]</sup>

[It is] an old opening, seldom used by champions without having fallen in disgrace. While White has several methods to get a small advantage, this defence is strategically sound. Black gets a good pawn structure and possibilities of attack on the kingside. His problems generally come from the white pressure on the d-column and a lack of space to manoeuvre his pieces.

**Boris Avrukh** writes, “The Budapest Gambit is almost a respectable opening; I doubt there is a refutation. Even in the lines where White manages to keep an extra pawn, Black always has a lot of play for it.”<sup>[34]</sup>

## 12.5.3 Strategic and tactical themes

### White builds up an imposing pawn centre

White has a strong pawn centre.

In the **Alekhine variation** White does not try to defend his e5-pawn and keep his material advantage, but instead he

concentrates on building an imposing pawn centre. This brings him good prospects of a space advantage that may serve as a basis for a future attack on the **kingside**. However, the extended pawn centre has its drawbacks, as Lalic explains: “White must invest some valuable tempi in protecting his pawn structure, which allows Black to seize the best squares for his minor pieces with excellent prospects for counterplay against the white centre.”<sup>[35]</sup>

Hence in this variation Black lets White build his pawn centre only to undermine it later, a playing philosophy espoused in the teachings of the **hypermodern school**. The strategic themes are similar to the ones that can be found in other openings like the **Four Pawns Attack**, the **Alekhine Defence** or the **Grünfeld Defence**.<sup>[35]</sup>

### Budapest rook

The “Budapest rook” is a manoeuvre, introduced by the IM Dolfi Drimer in 1968,<sup>[36]</sup> with which Black develops the a8 rook aggressively along the sixth rank using the moves a7–a5 and the **rook lift** Ra8–a6–h6.<sup>[37]</sup> For example, this can happen in the **Adler variation** after the move sequence 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.Be2 Ngxe5 7.Nxe5 Nxe5 8.a3 a5 9.0-0 0-0 10.Nc3 Ra6 11.b3 Rh6.



*The rook lift of the Budapest rook, along with an attacking queen manoeuvre.*

The rook is then used to support a piece attack against White's castled King.<sup>[38]</sup> Black can easily get several pieces around the white king, notably a rook to h6, a queen to h4 and a knight on g4. The queen's arrival on the h4-square is facilitated by the absence of a white knight on the f3-square (that would otherwise cover the h4-square) and of a black

knight on the f6-square (that would block the way for the black queen).<sup>[38]</sup> If White tries to defend with h2–h3, this may allow the Bc8 to be sacrificed at h3 in order to open the h-file.<sup>[38]</sup>

The Bc5 may not seem particularly useful in this attack, but by eyeing e3 it makes it difficult for White to play f4 to chase away the black knight;<sup>[39]</sup> furthermore, the attack on e3 is sometimes intensified with **major pieces** doubling on the e-file. Besides, the Bc5 can sometimes be recycled to the b8–h2 diagonal via Bc5–a7–b8, to apply still more pressure on h2.<sup>[40]</sup> It can also stay on the a7–g1 diagonal to put pressure on f2, if White pushes e3–e4 at some stage.

The “Budapest rook” was an invigorating innovation of the 1980s, and gave the gambit new life. However, inconveniences arise from delaying d7–d6 in order to allow the lift: the light-square bishop has to wait a long time to develop, and any attack on the Bc5 is potentially annoying for Black (since it means either closing the sixth rank with ...d6/...b6, abandoning the active a7–g1 diagonal, or blocking the rook when deployed to a7). This, in addition to the risk of awkwardness in the king side (a knight on f5 will fork the Rh6 and the Qh4) and the single-mindedness of Black's plan (with nothing to fall back on if the direct attack is repelled), has made some revisit the old lines, where it is instead the king's rook that is developed to h6. The queen's rook can then be retained on the **queenside**, and will be well-placed if the b-file opens as a result of Black's Bc5 being **exchanged** and recaptured with a b6 pawn.

### Advantages of ...Bb4+

Alekhine variation: here 6...Bb4+ is considered a good move.

In most variations Black has the opportunity to play Bb4+, a move whose advisability depends on White's possible answers. If White blocks the check with Nb1–c3 then Black should capture the knight only if White is forced to take back with the pawn, after which the **isolated, doubled pawns** are a positional advantage for Black that fully compensates the loss of the **bishop pair**, and even the gambitted pawn. Due to its immunity to pawn attacks, the c5-square may be used by Black as a stronghold for his pieces. Piece exchanges can be good for Black even if he is a pawn down, as he can hope to exploit the crippled pawn structure in the ending.<sup>[41]</sup> On the other hand, if White can recapture with a piece, the trade on c3 typically concedes the bishop pair for insufficient compensation.

If White is compelled to play Nb1–d2, it is sometimes a minuscule positional concession, as it makes it harder for this knight to reach its ideal square d5.<sup>[42]</sup> However, if Black is later compelled to exchange Bxd2, that is advanta-

geous to White who thereby gains the bishop pair.<sup>[42]</sup> Besides, in some situations the Bb4 could be as misplaced as the Nd2.<sup>[42]</sup> Finally, if White has to play Bd2, then Black should exchange the bishops only if White is forced to recapture with the Nb1, as a recapture by the Qd1 would still allow the Nb1 to reach the d5-square through Nb1–c3–d5.

For example in the Alekhine variation, after 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4 Nxe5 5.f4 Ng6 6.Nf3, the move 6...Bb4+ (see diagram at right) is good because White has no good reply apart from 7.Nc3. Indeed, 7.Nbd2? just loses a pawn after 7...Nxf4 whereas 7.Bd2?! Qe7! causes White great problems: both the pawn f4 and e4 pawns are attacked, and 8.Bxb4 Qxb4+ results in a double attack against b2 and f4.<sup>[43]</sup> After 7.Nc3 Black can either answer with 7...Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 or with 7...Qf6, simultaneously attacking c3 and f4.<sup>[notes 2]</sup>

### Pressure against the e4-square and the e3-pawn



Pressure against the e3-pawn

In the Adler variation 3...Ng4 4.Nf3, after White has moved f2–f4, the e3-pawn becomes a **backward pawn** on an **open file**. Black can then apply pressure on the e-file in general, against the e3-pawn and the e4-square in particular. Typical moves in this plan would include the manoeuvre Ne5–d7–f6, followed by putting the heavy pieces on the e-file with Rf8–e8 and Qd8–e7 (see diagram at right).<sup>[44]</sup> The Bc5 is already well placed to pressure the e3-pawn. Depending on circumstances, the Bc8 may be involved either on b7 or on f5, in both cases to assert control over the central e4-square.

This plan is viable only if certain conditions are met. The d7-square must be available for the Ne5, so that it can later

transfer to f6. White should also not be able to easily advance the e3-pawn to e4, where it would be adequately defended by the Nc3 and a possible Bf3.<sup>[44]</sup> Finally, White should not have the time to launch a quick attack on Black's castled position with the pawn thrust f4–f5–f6.

### Breakthrough with the c4–c5 push

Rubinstein variation after 10.Qxd2. White is ready to push the c4-pawn. For example, if 10...0-0?! then 11.c5!

In the main lines the pawn push c4–c5 often brings positional gains to White. In the Rubinstein variation 3...Ng4 4.Bf4 with 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3, after 7...Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 (see diagram at right) White gets the **bishop pair** and a space advantage. In order to build up on these potential advantages, the most common plan is to perform a **minority attack** on the queenside, with the goal of performing the pawn advance c4–c5 in favourable conditions.<sup>[45]</sup> This push can yield several advantages to White: it enhances the prospects of the **light-square bishop**, it creates a **half-open file** to attack with the rooks, and it creates an **isolated, backward pawn** on d6 after the exchange c5xd6.<sup>[45]</sup>

For example, in the diagram on the right, after the natural but mistaken 10...0-0?! White can immediately realise his strategic goal with 11.c5!<sup>[46]</sup> Then if Black accepts the temporary sacrifice after 11...Qxc5 12.Rc1 Qd6 13.Qxd6 cxd6 14.Rd1 White gets his pawn back and has created a weak pawn in d7, while if Black declines the pawn he has difficulties in developing his queenside (for example 11...d6 might be followed by 12.cxd6 Qxd6 13.Qxd6 cxd6 and the pawn on d6 is weak).<sup>[46]</sup> Therefore Black generally tries to hinder the c4–c5 push with moves like d7–d6, b7–b6 or Rf8–d8 (if this creates a hidden *vis-à-vis* between the Rd8 and the Qd2).<sup>[45]</sup>

Similarly, in the Rubinstein variation 3...Ng4 4.Bf4 with 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nc3, after 6...Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 White is saddled with doubled pawns in c3 and c4 that limit the scope of his bishop pair. Hence the push c4–c5 can be used to free the light-squared bishop and disrupt Black's position.<sup>[47]</sup>

In the Adler variation 3...Ng4 4.Nf3, after 4...Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 Re8 8.Nc3 Ngxe5 9.b3 a5 10.Bb2 Nxf3+ Bxf3 Ne5 12.Be2 Ra6 13.Qd5 Qe7 14.Ne4 Ba7 White has good reasons to push 15.c5.<sup>[48]</sup> This move would close the diagonal of the Ba7. It would make it harder for Black to develop the Bc8 as pawn pushes like b7–b6 or d7–d6 may be answered respectively by cxb6 or cxd6, creating a weak pawn for Black. Also, the prospects of the Be2 would be enhanced.

### Kieninger Trap

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3 Ngxe5 8.axb4 Nd3 #

The Kieninger Trap. If White plays 8.axb4 then 8...Nd3 mate.

The Kieninger Trap is named after **Georg Kieninger** who used it in an offhand game against Godai at Vienna in 1925.<sup>[49]</sup> It occurs in the **Rubinstein variation** 3...Ng4 4.Bf4 with 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3. The Bb4 is attacked but Black does not have to move it for the moment, and instead both regains the gambit pawn and sets a **trap** with 7...Ngxe5 (see diagram at right). Superficially, White seems to win a piece with 8.axb4??, but that would be falling into the Kieninger Trap because it would allow 8...Nd3 **mate**; even after the exchange 8.Nxe5 Nxe5, the threat of ...Nd3 mate remains and indirectly defends the Bb4 from capture.

A rare variant has also occurred in a **miniature** in the **Fajarowicz variation**, after the moves 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ne4 4.Qc2 Bb4+ 5.Nd2 d5 6.exd6 Bf5 7.Qa4+ Nc6 8.a3 Nc5 9.dxc7 Qe7! when White, trying to save his queen, fell into 10.Qd1 Nd3 mate.<sup>[50]</sup>

## 12.5.4 Adler variation 3...Ng4 4.Nf3

The Adler variation 4.Nf3

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3

The Adler variation is named after the game **Adler–Maróczy**, played at the 1896 Budapest tournament.<sup>[51][52]</sup> White is ready to return the e5-pawn in order to develop his pieces on their best squares, i.e. the d5-square for the Nb1, the f3-square for the Ng1 and the a1–h8 diagonal for the Bc1.

Black can try the minor line 4...Nc6 that delays the development of its **dark-square bishop**, to develop it along the a1–h8 diagonal instead of the a3–f8 diagonal, depending on the circumstances. But the main line is **4...Bc5** to attack the f2-pawn, forcing **5.e3**, blocking in White's bishop on c1, so that after **5...Nc6** White will not have enough pieces to protect his e5-pawn in the long run. Placing the bishop on the c5-square also has subtler points, as Tseitlin explains:<sup>[53]</sup>

At first sight the bishop on c5 lacks prospects, being held at bay by the pawn on e3, and is insecure in view of the threat to exchange it by Nc3–a4/e4. In reality, posting the bishop here has a deep strategic significance. It holds up the advance of the e- and the f-pawns (assuming the

white bishop will go to b2), and thereby secures e5 as a future knight outpost, which in turn restricts the activity of both White's bishops. As to the exchanging threat, the bishop may conveniently retreat on a7 or f8, or even in some cases remain on c5 with support from a pawn on b6.

After 5...Nc6, is 6.a3 a promising queenside attack, or just a loss of tempo?

An important theoretical decision for White is to choose whether to play a2–a3. While this move protects the b4 square and threatens the pawn advance b2–b4, it encourages Black's rook lift Ra8–a6–h6. As Lalic puts it:

It was not so long ago that 8.a3, with the obvious intention of expanding with b2–b4, was the standard move. However, after Black responds with the logical a7–a5, it became apparent in tournament practice that the inclusion of these moves is in fact in Black's favour, as it gives his queen's rook access into play via the a6-square.

### Line 4...Bc5 with a2–a3

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.a3

After 6.a3

The opinion of the move 6.a3 has gradually shifted from being the main continuation to being a possible continuation, then down to its present status of being considered a mistake. The threat to push b2–b4 must be taken seriously by Black, who typically answers **6...a5**. But in the 1980s it was discovered that the push a7–a5 was actually a very useful one for Black, as it allows the Ra8 to be developed along the sixth rank. Meanwhile, the push a2–a3 is less useful for White, as he will not be able to easily push b2–b4. As Tseitlin puts it, “the point is that 6...a5 fits into the plan of attacking White's kingside, whereas 6.a3 does little in the way of defending it”.<sup>[54]</sup> Thus if White does not find a clear way to make good use of his move a2–a3, it may turn out to be a critical waste of **tempo**.<sup>[55][56]</sup>

After the topical moves **7.b3 0-0 8.Bb2 Re8 9.Nc3 Ngxe5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.Be2** Black has regained the invested pawn. White has a space advantage in the centre and can initiate pressure here or on the queenside by pawn pushes like b3–b4 and c4–c5 (possibly supported by a knight on the d5-square). Meanwhile, the white king lacks defenders so Black can start a pieces-driven attack with the rook lift **11...Ra6** (see section “**Budapest rook**”). The stem game continued with **12.Nd5 Rh6 13.Bd4 d6 14.Ra2 Bf5 15.Bxc5 dxc5** and Black won in 26 moves.<sup>[57]</sup> To avoid such

an unfavourable development, White players have changed the move-order to keep the Bc1 on its original square as long as possible, so that it can help the defence. Thus, the typical move-order became 7.b3 0-0 8.Nc3 Re8 9.Be2 Ngxe5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.0-0 when 11...Ra6 would be met with 12.Nd5 Rh6 13.e4 immediately attacking the maveric rook. So Black usually opts for 11...d6, forgetting about the Ra8–a6–h6 manoeuvre. After 12.Bb2 ECO considers the situation as favourable to White, but Tseitlin thinks Black still has a lot of possibilities (e.g. the other rook lift Re8–e6–h6), so that “the struggle still lies ahead”.<sup>[58]</sup>

#### Line 4...Bc5 without a2–a3

After 9...Nxe5, shall White attack in the centre or on the kingside?

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6*

By refraining from the advance a2–a3 White tries to gain a tempo on the lines of the previous section, making it more difficult for Black to initiate the Re8–e6–h6 or Ra8–a6–h6 lifts. After the moves **6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 Re8 8.Nc3 Ngxe5 9.Nxe5 Nxe5** White has tried two different plans.

The older one sees White attack in the centre with moves like b2–b3, Bc1–b2, Qd1–d5, Nc3–e4 and c4–c5. White gets an important space advantage in the centre, but Black can attack the kingside with rook lifts. After 10.b3 a5 White can try to capture the Bc5 with 11.Na4 or 11.Ne4, one point being that the retreat 11...Ba7 would lock the Ra8 because Black has not played Ra8–a6 already. Lalic still thinks 11...Ba7 is the right move after 11.Ne4 due to the importance of the a7–g1 diagonal, but Black can also reroute the bishop with 11...Bf8 and “White has no obvious path to even a minute advantage”.<sup>[59]</sup> After 11.Na4 Black can also simply react by 11...b6 when the loss of the bishop pair is compensated by the semi-open b-file and improved control of the central squares.<sup>[60]</sup> Tseitlin considers that after the exchange on c5 Black has the better position.<sup>[61]</sup> Hence the main continuation is 11.Bb2, keeping the knight jumps for later. Then the most common plan for Black is a rook lift: the plan Ra8–a6–h6 was tried in the much-commented game Åkesson–Tagnon (Berlin Open 1984). Black duly won, but after the game continuation 11...Ra6 12.Qd5! Qe7 13.Ne4 Ba7 14.c5 Rg6 15.Rac1 Bb8 16.f4 authors do not agree on which side had the advantage. Borik and Tseitlin both consider White to have a positional advantage, with Tseitlin recommending instead 15...Nc6!, with dangerous threats.<sup>[62][63]</sup> However Lalic writes of 15...Bb8, “it is true that the bishop pair looks a bit pathetic lined up on the back rank just now, but there is no way to stop them breaking out later”.<sup>[40]</sup>

The second plan for White, unveiled by Spassky in 1990,

aims at a kingside *blitzkrieg* with moves like Kg1–h1, f2–f4, Be2–d3 and Qd1–h5. In the original game Black did not fathom White’s idea, so that after 10.Kh1 a5?! 11.f4 Nc6 12.Bd3 d6 13.Qh5! h6 14.Rf3 Black’s pieces were ill-placed to counter White’s attack.<sup>[64]</sup> A more principled plan for Black is to react in the centre, specifically targeting the backward e3–pawn and e4–square. After 10.Kh1 d6 11.f4 Nd7! 12.Bd3 Nf6 13.Qf3 Ng4 14.Nd1 f5! and Black has succeeded in inhibiting White’s e3–e4 expansion.<sup>[65]</sup> As Black was doing fine with the 11.f4 move-order, White has been searching for a new path with 10.Kh1 d6 11.Na4!? b6! 12.Bd2 a5 13.Nxc5 bxc5 14.f4 Nd7 15.Bf3 when **Jeremy Silman** prefers White.<sup>[66]</sup> White has even dared the immediate 10.f4 Nc6 11.Bd3 when it is extremely dangerous for Black to take the offered e3–pawn, as White gets a fierce kingside attack for free.<sup>[56]</sup>

#### 12.5.5 Rubinstein variation 3...Ng4 4.Bf4

The Rubinstein variation 4.Bf4

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4*

This move sequence is called the “Rubinstein variation” in reference to the famous game **Rubinstein–Vidmar** (Berlin 1918) when 4.Bf4 was first employed.<sup>[52][67]</sup> Various authors consider this move to be the most dangerous for Black.<sup>[56]</sup> It aims to answer 4...Bc5 with 5.e3 without blocking the Bc1, contrary to what happens in the Adler variation 4.Nf3. Another point is that in the Adler variation White faces the risk of a strong attack against his kingside (see section “**Budapest rook**”), while in the 4.Bf4 variation this is seldom the case because the Bf4 is well placed to protect White’s kingside. On the other hand, the early development of the bishop means that White is more vulnerable to the check Bf8–b4+, the b2–pawn is not defended, and in some rare cases the Bf4 can become subject to attack.

Apart from the sideline 4...g5, the main line continues with both players developing their pieces around the e5–pawn with 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ when White has an important choice between the moves 6.Nc3 and 6.Nbd2, each leading to extremely different play. With 6.Nc3 White acquiesces to the breakup of his queenside pawns in return for a material advantage of one pawn, the bishop pair and active play in the centre. With 6.Nbd2 White gives back the gambited pawn to keep a healthy pawn structure and acquire the **bishop pair**. After 6.Nbd2 Qe7 White generally plays 7.a3 to force the immediate exchange of bishop for knight, gaining the bishop pair, a spatial advantage and chances for a minority attack on the queenside. White can also try 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.e3 to win a tempo over the 7.a3 variation, though he may end up with the exchange at d2 made in less favourable circumstances, or not at all. The maverick gambit 6...f6 also

exists.<sup>[68]</sup>

### Sideline 4...g5

After 4...g5

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 g5*

The sideline 4...g5!? was not well regarded at the end of the 20th century.<sup>[notes 3]</sup> It weakens several squares—particularly f5 and h5—as they cannot be covered by the g-pawn any more. White can try to exploit these weaknesses with the manoeuvres Bf4–d2–c3 (pressure along the diagonal a1–h8), Ng1–e2–g3–h5 (pressure against the squares f6 and g7) and h2–h4 (to open the h-file). Nonetheless, the 4...g5 line has found new supporters in recent years thanks to black wins against both 5.Bg3 and 5.Bd2.<sup>[69][70]</sup>

For years, the reaction 5.Bg3 was not well considered, because the retreat does not make the most out of Black's provocative fourth move; as Tseitlin points out, "the bishop is in danger of staying out of play for a long time".<sup>[71]</sup> But later Lalic found that 5.Bg3 was "just as effective" as 5.Bd2.<sup>[72]</sup> Black concentrates on capturing the e5-pawn while White tries to get an advantage from the weakening of the black kingside. After the typical moves 5...Bg7 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Nc3 Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 d6 Lalic considers the best try to be 10.c5!, sacrificing a pawn to weaken Black's control on the e5-square and expose the black king further. White has also tried to quickly open the h-file with 7.h4 Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 but after 9...g4! Black succeeds in keeping the file closed.<sup>[73]</sup>

The alternative to 5.Bg3 is **5.Bd2** to place the bishop on the wide-open diagonal a1–h8, after which "White can expect a safe advantage".<sup>[72]</sup> Then according to Lalic, delaying the recapture with 5...Bg7 6.Bc3 Nc6 7.e3 Ngxe5 is not correct as White can gain an advantage by 8.h4 or 8.Qh5,<sup>[74]</sup> so the immediate **5...Nxe5** is better. For some time 6.Bc3 was well considered because Black had problems dealing with various positional threats, but the correct way for Black was found in 5...Nxe5 6.Bc3 Qe7 7.e3 Rg8! 8.Nf3 Nbc6 9.Be2 d6 10.Nd4 Bd7 11.b4 g4 with good counterplay for Black on the kingside.<sup>[75]</sup> White's efforts then switched to **6.Nf3** to open the e-file, something that Black cannot really avoid, as 6...Bg7 7.Nxe5 Bxe5 8.Bc3 would leave an advantage to White.<sup>[74]</sup> For example 8...Qe7 9.Bxe5 Qxe5 10.Nc3 d6 11.e3 and Black is at a loss for an equalising line,<sup>[76]</sup> White's advantage consisting in his ability to install his knight on the strong d5-square and to attack the weakened Black's kingside with the advance h2–h4. It is better for Black to continue with **6...Nxf3+ 7.exf3** when both 7...h5? and 7...Bg7 would fail to 8.Qe2+, so Black must try **7...d6 8.Qe2+ Be6** instead.<sup>[74]</sup>

### Line 6.Nc3

Black must choose between 8...Qa3 and 8...f6.

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nc3*

This is the only important line in the Budapest where Black is not ensured of regaining his sacrificed pawn. Black does best to immediately exchange the Nc3 with **6...Bxc3+ 7.bxc3** as otherwise White gets a small positional advantage simply by avoiding the doubled pawns (see the section "Advantages of ...Bb4+").<sup>[77][78]</sup> Then Black can put pressure on the e5-pawn with **7...Qe7** when White's only possibility to keep the pawn is **8.Qd5**. White threatens to ease the pressure with the move h2–h3 that would force the Ng4 to the unfavourable square h6, so Black's only possibilities to sustain the initiative are 8...Qa3 and 8...f6.

The line 8...Qa3 puts pressure on the white queenside pawns, pressure that may later be intensified with Nf6–e4. The black queen also gains access to the a5-square, from where it puts pressure on the e1–a5 diagonal aimed towards the white king. After 9.Rc1 f6 10.exf6 Nxf6 11.Qd2 d6 12.Nd4 0-0 we reach the position of the famous game between Rubinstein and Vidmar, when Rubinstein erred with 13.e3? and later lost.<sup>[79]</sup> After the better 13.f3 the correct method for Black is to target the c4-pawn with the regrouping Ne5/Qc5.<sup>[80]</sup> Hence Lalic thinks 11.Qd2 is inappropriate and gives Black excellent counterplay, and prefers 11.Qd3 or even 11.Qd1!? After 11.Qd3 0-0 12.g3 d6 13.Bg2 Black should switch to a materialistic mode with 13...Qxa2.<sup>[81]</sup>

In the other line **8...f6** Black does not want to decentralise his queen and prefers to concentrate on active piece play in the centre. After **9.exf6 Nxf6**, 10.Qd1, 10.Qd2 and 10.Qd3 are all possible, but each has its drawbacks: on d1 the queen is not developed, on d3 it is exposed to Bc8–f5 and on d2 it is exposed to Nf6–e4. Lalic considers 10.Qd3 to be the main move, qualifies 10.Qd1 as a "respectable option", but considers 10.Qd2 as "inaccurate". Meanwhile, Black will try to create counterplay by attacking either the weak c4-pawn, or the kingside with g7–g5 and h7–h5. In both cases a key possibility is the move Nf6–e4 that centralises the knight, attacks the weak c3-pawn, controls the c5-square and supports the g7–g5 thrust.

### Line 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3

After 7.a3 White will win the bishop pair.

**On the way till 10...d6** *1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3*

The Bb4 is attacked but Black can play 7...Ngxe5 to get the gambitted pawn back, as 8.axb4?? would allow the Kieninger trap 8...Nd3 mate (see the section "**Kieninger trap**"). Now White is more or less forced to exchange a pair of knights with 8.Nxe5 Nxe5.<sup>[notes 4]</sup> White still cannot win a piece with 9.axb4?? Nd3# or 9.Bxe5?! Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 Qxe5, so he usually plays 9.e3 in order to protect the c4-pawn and defuse the mating threat, so that now Black is obliged to move his Bb4. As 9...Bd6 would misplace the bishop and 9...Ba5?? would lose the bishop to 10.b4 Bb6 11.c5, Black usually plays 9...Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2.<sup>[notes 5]</sup>

After 10.Qxd2, Tseitlin explains that "opening manuals assess this position as favourable to White on the basis of the bishop pair. However, considering the closed nature of the position, White faces substantial difficulties in the realisation of this nominal advantage."<sup>[82]</sup> Black has not a lot of things to be proud of as there are no targets in White's camp, but can put up a lot of resistance thanks to small assets. Black's Ne5 is strongly centralised, attacks the c4-pawn, and restricts the Bf1 from moving to the natural squares d3 and f3. Moreover, exchanging the knight with Bxe5 is not appealing for White, since that would mean losing the advantage of the bishop pair. Also, the Bc8 can sometimes become better than its counterpart the Bf1, if it makes it to the good squares b7 or c6 while the Bf1 remains restricted by the Ne5.

This explains the most natural plans for both sides. White will try a **minority attack** on the queenside, in order to increase its space advantage and to create some weaknesses in the black pawns (e.g. an **isolated pawn** or a **backward pawn**). So White will try to use the advances b2–b4 or c4–c5 in good conditions, supported by the queen and the rooks on the c-file and the d-file. On the other hand, Black will try to keep the position closed, most importantly by keeping the c4-pawn where it is in order to keep the Bf1 at bay. This can be achieved by moves like b7–b6 and d7–d6, and sometimes the manoeuvre Ne5–d7–f8–e6. The first move by Black has to be **10...d6!** because otherwise White plays 11.c5! and gets a clear advantage immediately. For example 10...b6? loses a pawn to 11.Qd5 Nc6 12.Bxc7, and 10...0-0?! is bad because of 11.c5! Qxc5? 12.Rc1 Qe7 13.Rxc7 and White is winning already.<sup>[46]</sup>

International Master Timothy Taylor has suggested an alternative for Black on move 9. He regards 9...Bxd2+ as inferior, arguing that "the strong black bishop is traded for the inoffensive knight, and white gets the long-term advantage of the two bishops in a semi-open game".<sup>[83]</sup> Taylor instead advocates **9...Bc5**, when Black stands well after 10.b4 Bd4! (11.exd4?? Nd3#) 11.Rb1 d6 12.Be2 Bf5 13.Rb3 Ng6 14.Bg3 (14.exd4 Nxf4 15.Re3? Nxe2+ wins; 14.Bxd6 exd6 15.exd4 Nf4 16.g3 Bc2! wins material) Bf6; 10.Ne4 Ng6; 10.Nb3 Bd6; or 10.Be2 d6.<sup>[84]</sup>

**Battle for the push c4–c5** After 10...d6 White wants to push c4–c5 to free his light-square bishop.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3 Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.e3 Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 d6

After 10...d6! White can try (and has tried) about any move that supports the aforementioned plan. In particular, White has to choose if he wants to start active operations on the queenside immediately (e.g. Rc1, Qc3, c5), or if he wants to finish his development first (with Be2 and 0-0). The immediate 11.c5!? is a possible pawn sacrifice in order to open some diagonals for the bishops. As Lalic points out, "after 11...dxc5 Black's knight on e5 has lost its support and therefore all tactical motifs based on Qd5 and Bb5+ must be carefully checked".<sup>[85]</sup> White gets a powerful attack for his pawn but nothing decisive. The same idea can be tried with the preparatory 11.Rc1, and after 11...0-0 12.c5!? dxc5 13.Qd5 Ng6 14.Bg3 White should be reminded that he has not finished his development with 14...Qf6! and a counter-attack on the b2-pawn.<sup>[86][87]</sup> Playing Black, **Svidler** chose a different path with 11...b6 but his opponent **Lesiège** nevertheless sacrificed the pawn with 12.c5! bxc5 13.b4 0-0 14.bxc5 Bb7 15.f3 and Svidler chose to destroy his own pawn structure with 15...dxc5!? to activate his pieces and make use of the d-file.<sup>[88]</sup> The most popular move is 11.Be2, where White delays his queenside play until he has achieved castling.<sup>[89]</sup> It also gives Black more time to organise a defence on the queenside with b7–b6, either now or after 11...0-0.

### Line 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.e3

After 7.e3, White concentrates on castling.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.e3

In this variation White tries to avoid the move a2–a3 in order to gain a tempo over the 7.a3 variation. After the standard moves 7...Ngxe5 8.Nxe5 Nxe5 9.Be2 followed by 10.0-0 it is Black's last chance to exchange the Bb4 for the Nd2. The game will take an entirely different structure depending on whether Black gives up the bishop pair or tries to keep it.

Lalic thinks the strategies in which Black gives up the bishop pair (by exchanging its Bb4 for the Nd2) for nothing are a mistake. He does not like the strategy to retreat the Bb4 in d6 either, because they are too drawish. He recommends the strategy to retreat the bishop in c5, and maintain its position there with the help of the a7–a5 pawn advance.<sup>[90]</sup>

**Black gives up the bishop pair** When Black opts for 10...Bxd2, he runs the risk to end up a tempo down over the 7.a3 variation and to be soon unable to meet White's positional threats on the queenside. White can avoid the push a2–a3 and continue with the standard plans of the 7.a3 variation.<sup>[91]</sup> However, everything is not that bad for Black. First, to implement his plan White has to concentrate on development (9.Be2, 10.0-0) before he turns his attention to the queenside. That means Black has more time to organise his play than in the 7.a3 variation, notably to attempt a blockade of the c5-square. Moreover, as White does not put immediate pressure on Black's position, Black is not compelled to castle rapidly and he can keep his king in the centre for a longer time, or even castle queenside. Hence Lalic note that "White has not wasted time with a2–a3, but in fact it is not so easy to capitalise on this extra tempo."<sup>[92]</sup>

A possibility for Black is to develop his light-square bishop rapidly, by prioritising the moves b7–b6 and Bc8–b7 over castling and d7–d6. The game Solozhenkin–Stiazhkin (Leningrad 1990) continued with 9...b6 10.0-0 Bxd2 11.Qxd2 Bb7 12.c5 bxc5 13.Qa5 d6 14.Bxe5 dxe5 15.Rfc1 and Moskalenko assesses this position as better for White;<sup>[93]</sup> Lalic suggests that 13...Ng6 is an improvement.<sup>[94]</sup> In the game Gausel–Reite (Norwegian Team Championship 1991), after the same 9.Be2 b6 10.0-0 Bxd2 11.Qxd2 Bb7 Black introduced a highly original plan by avoiding the natural advance d7–d6, and instead blocked a white c5-push by playing ...c5 himself. The game continued 12.Qc3 f6 13.b4 c5!? and Lalic was "deeply impressed by this plan, which really spoils all of White's fun". The c4-pawn is never allowed to advance, so that the Be2 is durably restricted. The Bf4 is obstructed by the Ne5, that cannot be easily removed. The weakness of the d7-pawn is not a worry as it can be protected by Bb7–c6 if necessary.<sup>[92]</sup>

**Black keeps the bishop pair** After 10.0-0 d6 11.Nb3

After 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 Black can avoid the immediate exchange of his Bb4 against the Nd2 in several ways. The first one, resurrected and elaborated by the grandmaster Pavel Blatny, is to exchange the Bb4 for the Bf4. This can be achieved via 10...Ng6 11.Bg3 (11.Bxc7?? d6 loses a piece) 11...Bd6 12.Bxd6 Qxd6. White still has possibilities to play for an advantage due to his more advanced development, his space advantage on the queenside and the possibility to install his knight on the good square d5. Taylor considers this Black's best line, stating that Black has not given White the bishop pair, nor weakened his pawn structure, and should be able to gradually equalize.<sup>[95]</sup>

The other possibility for Black is to keep his Bb4 as long as possible, exchanging it against the white knight only in favourable circumstances. A couple of attempts have been

done with this in mind, with subtle variations along the moves a7–a5, b7–b6 and d7–d6. Against the mundane 10...d6 White can continue with 11.Nb3 (see diagram at right) to play on the queenside against the exposed Bb4, or 11.Nb1 to recycle the knight on the ideal d5-square. Another idea is the immediate 10...a5, to have the d6-square for the bishop, inhibit the b2–b4 push and have the possible a5–a4 pawn advance if the white knight moves to b3. In the game Mikhalevski–Chabanon (Bad Endbach 1995)<sup>[96]</sup> Black kept the bishop with 11.Nb3 a4 12.a3 Bd6 13.Nd4 Bc5 14.Nb5 d6 15.Nc3 Ng6 16.Bg3 f5 and had dynamic play.<sup>[97]</sup>

### Gambits 5.Nbd2 d6 and 6.Nbd2 f6

The gambit 4...Bb4+ 5.Nbd2 d6

With 4...Bb4+ 5.Nbd2 d6 (see diagram at right) Black wants to open the diagonal a1–h8 for his queen. After 6.exd6 Qf6 White can react to the attack on his Bf4 in several ways, the best one being 7.Nh3 to develop a piece and protect both the Bf4 and the f2-pawn. It also helps that the Bf4 is still guarding the Nd2, so that after 7...Qxb2? there is not the threat of winning the exchange (8...Bxd2+ would be answered by 9.Bxd2) and White can repel Black's attack with 8.Rb1 Qa3 9.Rb3 Qa5 10.dxc7 Nc6 11.a3! Be7 12.e3.<sup>[98]</sup> Instead, Black must play energetically with 7...Nxf2 8.Kxf2 Bxh3 9.g3 Bxf1 10.dxc7!? Nc6 11.Rxf1 and here Lalic recommends 11...0-0 12.Kg2 Rfe8.<sup>[99]</sup>

The other gambit, 4...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+ 6.Nbd2 f6 7.exf6 Qxf6, is much riskier, as Black weakens his kingside and does not open a diagonal for his Bc8. Black tries to take advantage of the fact White has moved his dark-squared bishop away from the queenside, leaving the b2-pawn without protection. The correct plan for White was shown by Gleizerov who played 8.e3 Qxb2 9.Be2 d6 10.0-0 0-0 11.Nb3 Qf6 12.c5! to open the a2–g8 diagonal that was weakened precisely by the gambit move 6...f6. The move 11.Nb3 is not only useful to support the c4–c5 push, but also to exchange the knight against Black's dark-squared bishop after a possible a2–a3 forcing the retreat Bb4–c5.<sup>[100]</sup> As Lalic puts it, "I doubt if Black has a satisfactory answer to White's play in this game".<sup>[101]</sup>

### 12.5.6 Alekhine variation 3...Ng4 4.e4

The Alekhine variation 4.e4

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4

This variation is named after Alekhine thanks to his wins in the games Alekhine–Rabinovic (Baden Baden, 1925) and

Alekhine–Seitz (Hastings, 1926).<sup>[52][102][notes 6]</sup> White does not try to keep its material advantage (the e5-pawn) and concentrates on establishing a strong pawn center and space advantage. A controversial point is whether the typical black manoeuvre Bf8–b4–xc3 is advantageous for Black (as it saddles White with doubled pawns) or for White (as it reinforces his centre). Lalic thinks both, considering 6...Bb4+ to be a bad move after 4...Nxe5 5.f4 Nec6 6.Nf3,<sup>[103]</sup> but a good one after 4...Nxe5 5.f4 Nec6 6.Be3.<sup>[104]</sup> After 4.e4 the main line is **4...Nxe5 5.f4** when Black has an important choice to make about where to move the Ne5. The retreat to the queenside with 5...Nec6 is considered best,<sup>[105]</sup> while the retreat to the kingside with 5...Ng6 is probably playable.<sup>[106]</sup>

Taylor considers 4...Nxe5 inferior, recommending instead a rarely played idea of Richard Réti, **4...h5!** (Taylor's exclamation point). Then 5.Nf3 would allow 5...Bc5, while Taylor suggests meeting 5.Be2 with 5...Nc6! and 5.f4 with 5...Bc5 with quick development compensating for the lost pawn. He considers the main line to be 4...h5 5.h3 Nxe5 6.Be3 Bb4+, with good play for Black.<sup>[107]</sup>

### Line 5...Nec6

After 5.f4 Nec6 6.Be3

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4 Nxe5 5.f4 Nec6*

The Knight on c6 is safer than on g6, and is well-placed as part of a general strategy to control the central dark squares. It can go to d4 while the other Knight can go to c5 via a6 or d7. After 6.Nf3 Bc5 White has difficulties castling short, because the plan to exchange the dark-squared bishops with Bd3/Qe2/Be3 can be met by Bg4/Nd4 to muddy the waters.<sup>[108]</sup> As Lalic points out:<sup>[109]</sup>

White can no longer castle kingside and will usually have to go the other way. However, this is rather slow and gives Black time to try to undermine the white centre. To this end Bc8–g4 often comes in handy, in order to pin the white knight on f3 against the white queen. Note that Black should wait until his opponent has wasted a tempo with Qe2.

The main continuation **6.Be3** controls the a7–g1 diagonal and is considered to be the best reply.<sup>[110]</sup> If Black wants to contest the c5-square for his Bf8 he can try 6...Na6,<sup>[111]</sup> but most games continue with **6...Bb4+**. Here the best reply for White is controversial.<sup>[notes 7]</sup>

After 7.Nc3 Black has the *zwischenzug* 7...Qh4+ 8.g3 Bxc3+ 9.bxc3 Qe7 so that the diagonal a8–h1 is weakened before Black develops the Bc8 to the b7-square. The queen

on the e7-square is well placed to pressure the e4-pawn. However, as most of Black's pieces are on the queenside, continuing with pawn pushes like f7–f5 is probably too weakening, as Alekhine demonstrated in his game against Seitz in 1925.<sup>[112]</sup> So Black does best to attack with pieces, possibly with the setup b6/Nc5/Bb7/0-0-0.<sup>[113]</sup> In that case Tseitlin considers that with a knight on c5 the move d7–d6 should be avoided if Black has to respond to the capture Bxc5 by dxc5, because the white pawns in e4 and f4 would have too much leeway.<sup>[114]</sup>

After 7.Nd2 Qe7 8.a3 Lalic considers 8...Qxe4 should be avoided, e.g. the continuation 9.Kf2 Bxd2 10.Qxd2 0-0 11.Nf3 d6 12.Re1 gives White several tempi against the black queen.<sup>[115]</sup> After the better 8...Bc5 9.Bxc5 Qxc5 10.Qf3 Lalic recommends 10...a5.<sup>[116]</sup> The introduction of the intermediate 7...Qh4+ 8.g3 Qe7 does not change Lalic's opinion, as after 9.Bg2 Na6 10.a3 Bc5 11.Bxc5 Nxc5 12.b4 Ne6 the bishop was well placed on g2 and Black experienced difficulties developing the Bc8.<sup>[117]</sup> But Lalic does not mention the game **Pomar–Heidenfeld** cited by Borik, in which Black played the advance a7–a5 to restrict the white advance b2–b4, and achieved equality after 9.Bg2 a5 10.Ne2 Na6.<sup>[118]</sup> Instead, he recommends 7...d6 8.Nf3 0-0 9.Bd3 and now the same development as in Pomar's game.<sup>[119]</sup>

9...a5 and 10...Na6 deserves attention, when White's movements on the queenside are more restricted and the black knight will be able to settle on the c5-square without being kicked by the thematic b2–b4. It may appear that we have reached the same position elaborated in previous games a tempo down for Black, since he has committed his bishop to b4 and will later drop back to the c5-square instead of heading there at once. However, the white knight is less actively placed on d2 and in fact this fully compensates Black for the slight loss of time.

### Line 5...Ng6

After 5.f4 Ng6

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4 Nxe5 5.f4 Ng6*

The Knight on g6 puts the f4-pawn under pressure, but may be embarrassed later by the pawn thrust f4–f5. Now 6.a3, an attempt to deny squares from the Bf8 by continuing with b2–b4 or Bc1–e3, does not achieve its goal after 6...Bc5! 7.b4?! Bxg1! 8.Rxg1 0-0! 9.Qf3 d6 10.g4 a5 11.b5 Nd7 12.Ra2 Nc5 when Black's superior pawn structure and well-positioned Nc5 gives him the advantage.<sup>[120]</sup> That leaves White with the choice between 6.Nf3 and 6.Be3.

The move 6.Nf3 controls the e5-square in order to prepare the push f4–f5. Unlike after 5...Nec6, White does not have to fear 6...Bc5?!, which encounters difficulties after 7.f5! Nh4 8.Ng5!, when the black knight is already in danger of being lost to Qd1–g4 or Qd1–h5.<sup>[121]</sup> Instead Black must react quickly with 6...Bb4+ 7.Nc3 when he can adopt a normal setup with d6/0-0/Nc6/b6 or act boldly with 7...Qf6 threatening both the Nc3 and the f4-pawn.<sup>[122]</sup> One point in favour of 7...Qf6 is that after 8.e5 Qb6 the black queen prevents White from castling short and is well placed if White castles long.<sup>[123]</sup>

The move 6.Be3 takes the a7–g1 diagonal from Black's Bf8 and may in some lines prepare the long castle. After the mandatory 6...Bb4+ White can opt for 7.Nd2 to avoid having doubled pawns, but he must be prepared to sacrifice a pawn after 7...Qe7 8.Kf2!? Bxd2 9.Qxd2 Qxe4 10.Bd3 with piece activity for the pawn deficit,<sup>[124]</sup> because the normal defence 8.Bd3? runs into 8...Qd6! and both the Bd3 and the f4-pawn are attacked.<sup>[125]</sup> White does not need, however, bother too much about the doubled pawns and after 7.Nc3 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 a peaceful black player might choose the quiet 8...b6!? followed by a normal development with d6/0-0/Bb7/Nd7/Re8/Nc5.<sup>[106]</sup> Instead of 8...b6 a more adventurous black player could choose 8...Qe7 9.Bd3 f5!? as indicated by Borik, Tseitlin and Lalic,<sup>[106][126][127]</sup> but in his more recent book Moskalenko thinks “this move complicates the game too much”.<sup>[128]</sup> If the black player is neither peaceful nor aggressive, Lalic proposes an alternative with 8...Qe7 9.Bd3 0-0 10.Qd2 and only now that Black has his king safe shall he unleash 10...f5!?, when “it is not so easy for White to meet [10...f5] as the two main responses, 11.e5 and 11.exf5, allow Black promising chances with 11...d6 and 11...Nxf4 respectively”.

### 12.5.7 Fajarowicz variation 3...Ne4

The Fajarowicz variation 3...Ne4

The line 3...Ne4 4.Qc2 Bb4+

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ne4* The Fajarowicz variation is said to have its origins in the chess circles from Leipzig, with the first important game being H.Steiner–Fajarowicz at the 1928 Wiesbaden tournament.<sup>[129][130]</sup> In this variation, Black makes no immediate effort to regain the gambit pawn, preferring to concentrate on active piece play and tactical tricks.<sup>[notes 8]</sup>

The move 4.a3 allows White to avoid the annoying bishop check on b4, the also annoying knight jump to b4, and prepares Qc2 to undermine Black's knight. Both Lalic and de Firmian consider it to be White's best move,<sup>[131]</sup> with de Firmian assessing it as leading to a large advantage for

White.<sup>[132]</sup> Lalic considers 4...b6!? to be the best answer, one point being that Qd1–c2, so effective in most of the other lines, can be met by Bc8–b7. After 5.Nd2 Bb7 6.Qc2 Lalic gives 6...Nxd2 7.Bxd2 a5! when the black bishops will be excellently placed on the b7- and c5-squares.<sup>[133]</sup> Lalic recommends 6.Nf3 instead,<sup>[134]</sup> while de Firmian continues by 5.Nf3 Bb7 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.Qc2 with a large advantage for White.<sup>[132][135]</sup>

The move 4.Nf3 develops a piece and covers the sensitive d2-square. After 4...Bb4+ 5.Nbd2 Nc6 6.a3 Black can easily get confused by the move-order. The natural 6...Nxd2 7.Bxd2 Bxd2+ 8.Qxd2 Qe7 9.Qc3 transposes in the same position as after 5.Bd2, but White can also try 6...Nxd2 7.axb4! Nxf3+ 8.gxf3 Nxe5 9.Rg1 Qe7 10.Ra3! with a strong initiative.<sup>[136]</sup> White can even retain his bishop with 6...Nxd2 7.Nxd2 and now Borik recommends 7...Bf8 with difficult play for Black as he is not certain to gain his pawn back.<sup>[137]</sup> To avoid these possibilities Lalic advises the move-order 6...Bxd2+ 7.Bxd2 Nxd2 8.Qxd2 Qe7, but does not mention the possibility of White answering 6...Bxd2+ with 7.Nxd2. A possible improvement for Black (after 4...Bb4+ 5.Nbd2) would be 5...d5 with compensation for the pawn in all lines.<sup>[138]</sup>

The line 4.Qc2 immediately attacks the Ne4, as a retreat by Black would effectively surrender his temporary lead in development, which is the compensation for the sacrificed pawn. Black must continue to develop while trying to keep the Ne4 on its square, but that is by no means easy. Borik thinks 4.Qc2 is the move “that gives Black the most problems to solve”,<sup>[139]</sup> but Lalic does not agree at all, stating that the reply “4...Bb4+ [...] followed by d7–d5 ensures Black a rapid development and plenty of counterplay. It is for this reason that 4.Qc2 is not on the danger list”.<sup>[140]</sup> The reply 4...Bb4+ (see diagram at right) pins the white pieces before deciding what to do with the Ne4. White cannot reply 5.Bd2 as he would lose the bishop pair and Black would easily regain the e5-pawn with Nc6/Qe7/0-0/Re8. After 5.Nd2 this knight would be misplaced and would block the Bc1, so Black could open the game with 5...d5 in favourable circumstances. Best for White is 5.Nc3 d5 6.exd6 Bf5 7.Bd2 Nxd6 8.e4! Bxc3 9.Bxc3 Bxe4 when Black has regained his pawn but White has the bishop pair and possibilities of an attack on the kingside.<sup>[141]</sup>

### 12.5.8 Other possibilities

#### Line 3...Ng4 4.e3

After 4.e3 Nxe5 5.Nh3

*1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e3*

Apart from the main lines 4.Bf4, 4.Nf3 and 4.e4, the

only significant other fourth move is **4.e3** to continue by 4...Nxe5 5.Nh3 (or the other move-order 4.Nh3 and 5.e3) so that the white knight starts the journey Ng1–h3–f4–d5 reach its ideal d5-square.<sup>[142]</sup> The idea with 4.e3 and 5.Nh3 was favorite of a leading Soviet coach and writer **Mikhail Shereshevsky**, who wrote in his 1994 book *The Soviet Chess Conveyor* that the line was first shown to him by a strong correspondence player **Donatas Lapienis**.<sup>[143]</sup> Black has tried to prevent White's idea by the suitably strange-looking move 5...Ng6, taking the f4-square from the Nh3. Then White can develop along various setups, the most active being 6.Qh5 with the possibility Nh3–g5 in store to recycle the knight towards a more central position.<sup>[144]</sup> Black can also ignore White's intentions and concentrate on his own play by placing the Nb8 on c5, in order to put pressure on the d3-square. After 5...g6 6.Nf4 Bg7 7.Be2 0-0 8.0-0 d6 9.Nc3 Nbd7 10.Qd2 a5 11.b3 Nc5 the position of Black's knights is secured and Black's position is similar to the Leningrad variation of the **Dutch Defence** (once he has played f7–f5).<sup>[145]</sup> White has no reason, however, to abandon the a1–h8 diagonal to Black, and he can try 5...g6 6.Bd2 d6 7.Nf4 Bg7 8.Bc3 0-0 9.Be2 Nbd7 10.Nd2 b6 and in one game White gained a minimal edge.<sup>[146]</sup>

### Other fourth moves after 3...Ng4

After 4.Qd4

A few other lines have been tried, with the outcome varying from an immediate equality to a clear advantage for Black. The cooling **4.e6** avoids complications and heads for an equal endgame with 4...dxe6 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8, Black's loss of the right to castle being of no great importance since queens have been traded. If Black wants to avoid this early endgame, he can try 4...Bb4+ 5.Nc3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 dxe6 and now the exchange of queens would give a plus to Black, as the white queenside pawns are isolated and doubled.<sup>[147]</sup> The greedy **4.f4** is weak because White neglects his development and weakens the a7–g1 diagonal.<sup>[148][149][150][151]</sup> Black can immediately exploit this with 4...Bc5, which threatens a fork on f2 and forbids White's castling; Black may later push d7–d6 to open the centre, e.g. 5.Nh3 0-0 6.Nc3 d6 7.exd6 cxd6 when Black has good squares for its pieces while White's castling is delayed.

Another reasonable-looking move is **4.Qd4** as it protects the e5-pawn and attacks the Ng4. However, *“the problem for White in the Budapest is that natural moves often lead to disaster”*.<sup>[152]</sup> Best for Black is the gambit 4...d6 5.exd6 Nc6! 6.Qd1 Bxd6, when the natural 7.Nf3?? is an error because of 7...Nxf2! 8.Kxf2 Bg3+ winning the queen.<sup>[153]</sup> White must develop quietly with moves like Nc3/Nf3/e3/Be2, allowing Black to find active positions

for his pieces with 0-0/Be6/Qe7/Rfd8, and preparing several sacrificial ideas on e3 or f2, with excellent attacking possibilities.<sup>[154]</sup> Similar to 4.Qd4 is **4.Qd5** when after 4...Nc6 White can seize the last opportunity to return to calm waters with 5.Bf4 Bb4+ 6.Nc3 which will transpose in the Rubinstein line,<sup>[155]</sup> or he can try 5.Nf3 d6 6.exd6 Be6 7.d7+ Bxd7 when Black's lead in development compensates for the pawn.<sup>[156]</sup>

### Declining the gambit

Declining the gambit is almost never seen in master play because it promises White equality at best. After **3.d5?! Bc5** White has prematurely blocked the central position, giving the a7–g1 diagonal to Black for his bishop. In this variation Black can either play on the queenside with a plan like b5/Nb6/Bd7, or on the kingside with a plan like Ne8/g6/Ng7/f5.<sup>[157]</sup> The shy **3.e3?! exd4 4.exd4** transposes into a line of the Exchange Variation of the **French Defence** with 4...d5, but Black can also develop rapidly with 4...Bb4+ 5.Bd2 Bxd2+ 6.Nxd2 0-0.<sup>[158][159]</sup> After **3.e4?** Black gains a crushing attack via 3...Nxe4 4.dxe5 Bc5 5.Nh3 d6 6.Qe2 f5 7.exf6 0-0! 8.fxc7 Re8 9.Be3 Bxe3 10.fxe3 Bxh3 11.gxh3 Qh4+.<sup>[160][161]</sup> After **3.Bg5?! the game Ladmann–Tartakower** (Scarborough 1929) continued with 3...exd4 4.Qxd4 Be7 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Qd1 Ne4 7.Bxe7 Qxe7 8.a3 d6 9.e3 0-0 10.Be2 Qf6 11.Nbd2 Bf5 when both Tseitlin and Borik assess the position as favourable for Black.<sup>[158][162]</sup> After **3.Nf3?! the game Menchik–Tartakower** (Paris 1929)<sup>[163]</sup> continued with 3...e4 4.Nfd2 d5 5.cxd5?! Qxd5 6.e3 Bb4 7.Nc3 Bxc3 8.bxc3 0-0 and White has problems developing his kingside because of the potential weakness of g2.<sup>[162]</sup>

## 12.5.9 Illustrative games

### Wu Shaobin–Nadanian, Singapore 2006

The following game was played between the Chinese GM Wu Shaobin (White) and Armenian IM Ashot Nadanian (Black) at Singapore 2006.<sup>[notes 10]</sup>

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Bc5 5.e3 Nc6 6.Be2 Ncxe5 7.Nxe5 Nxe5 8.0-0 0-0 9.b3 Re8 10.Bb2 a5** Preparing Dolfi Drimer's rook manoeuvre Ra8–a6–h6. Nadanian calls the pawn advance a7–a5 “the soul of the Budapest Gambit”.<sup>[164]</sup> **11.Nc3 Ra6 12.Ne4 Ba7 13.Ng3 Qh4 14.Nf5 Qg5!?** This was a new move, before 14...Qe4 had been played. **15.Nd4 Rg6 16.g3 d5?! 18...Qh6** was stronger. **17.cxd5?** White should have played 17.Nb5! **17...Bh3! 18.Re1 Ng4 19.Nf3 Qxe3!** Karolyi writes, “This shows Kasparov-like aggression and ingenuity.” **20.Bd4 Qxf2+!! 21.Bxf2 Bxf2+ 22.Kh1 Bb6**

**23.Qb1?** White should have defended with 23.Rf1! After 23...Ne3 24.Qd3 Bg2+ 25.Kg1 Bh3 White can either repeat moves with 26.Kh1, or try 26.Nd4. **23...Nf2+ 24.Kg1 Rf6!** Black has time to increase the pressure. **25.b4!** If 25.Qc2?, then 25...Ng4+ 26.Kh1 Bg2+! winning the queen. **25...a4!** But not 25...Rxf3? 26.bxa5. **26.Ng5** Black can now force mate in 8 moves. **26...Ng4+! 27.Kh1 Bg2+!!** “This is a marvellous move, and it must have been such a thrill to play it on the board.” (Karolyi). **28.Kxg2 Rf2+ 29.Kh3 Rxh2+ 30.Kxg4 h5+ 31.Kf4 Be3+ 0–1**<sup>[165]</sup>

## 12.5.10 See also

- List of chess openings
- List of chess openings named after places
- Indian Defence

## 12.5.11 Notes

- [1] White’s plan involves pawn advances on the queenside, resulting in the creation of a weak pawn for Black, then winning this weak pawn. In this process all minor pieces and queenside pawns are likely to disappear, so that White ends up in a better ending with four pawns on the kingside against three for Black, and only major pieces. This type of ending has drawish tendencies, as Kaposztas demonstrated in his games against Meleghegyi (Budapest 1981), Petran (Budapest 1974) or Farago (Budapest 1975), all of them drawn.
- [2] Another example is in the game Döry–Tartakower (Vienna 1928), when after the initial opening sequence 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e3 Nxe5 5.Nf3 the answer 5...Bb4+?! is bad because White can play 6.Nbd2 to avoid the exchange of bishops and gain a tempo later with a2–a3, with a small plus (see Tseitlin 1992, p.13).  
A third example is in the Adler variation after 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 when Black should not play 4...Bb4+ because White can answer 5.Nbd2! Nc6 6.e3 Ngxe5 7.Nxe5 Nxe5 8.a3! Bxd2+ 9.Qxd2 and White has the better prospects. He has the bishop pair and he can develop his Bc1 on the influential a1–h8 diagonal (see Tseitlin 1992, p.69).
- [3] Borik wrote that “the move 4...g5 creates irreparable weaknesses in Black’s camp” (see Borik 1986, p.22), while Tseitlin decided “this extravagant tactical stroke weakens the kingside and, on general grounds alone, cannot be good” (see Tseitlin 1992, p.41). Lalic warned that “Black should be aware of the risks he is taking by playing such a line” (see Lalic 1998, p.65).
- [4] Black threatens both the c4-pawn and the Nf3, and 8.e3?! Nxf3+ forces either 9.gxf3 with doubled pawns or 9.Qxf3 Bxd2+ 10.Kxd2, when White cannot castle any more. White

does not want to play 8.Bxe5?! either because it would cede the bishop pair, which is the main source of White’s hopes for an advantage in this line.

- [5] Note that for Black, the sequence 7...Ngxe5 8...Nxe5 9...Bxd2+ is not only cunning, but also the best move-order as another sequence would give White an early opportunity to realise the advantageous c4–c5 push (whose advantages are explained in the section “Breakthrough with the c4–c5 push”). For example after 7...Bxd2+?! 8.Qxd2 Ngxe5 9.Nxe5 Nxe5 White should not play the usual 10.e3?! but should strive for more with the immediate 10.c5! as Black cannot take in c5 without losing the c7-pawn because of the possibilities Ra1–c1 and Qd2–c3 (see Lalic 1998, p.33).
- [6] As cited by Tseitlin (p.21), Alekhine himself stated:
- This is considered with good reason to be White’s best system against the Budapest Gambit. White hands the pawn back, but in return gains control of d5. Over the next few moves, however, he has to play with extreme precision, since otherwise his central pawn position may become the object of a successful attack by Black.
- [7] While Borik does not express a preference, Alekhine considers 7.Nc3! is “much stronger than 7.Nd2, for with the knight threatening to jump to d5, Black will sooner or later be forced to exchange his important dark-squared bishop for it. The doubling of the c-pawns in these circumstances is not something White should fear.” Tseitlin agrees, stating that “after 7.Nd2 Black has no difficulty at all” (see Tseitlin 1992, pp.31 & 119). On the other hand, Lalic thinks 7.Nd2! is more accurate as “White avoids the doubled c-pawns that are likely to occur after 7.Nc3, and this knight can later be deployed via the b3-square” (see Lalic 1998, p.111).
- [8] These tactical pitfalls include notably a Bb4+ at an annoying moment, a Qf6 with a double attack on b2 and f2, (after 1...d6 2.exd6 Bxd6) the pseudo-sacrifice 3...Nxf2 4.Kxf2 Bg3+ and 5...Qxd1 winning White’s queen for two minor pieces, and a concerted attack on the d3 square with the setup Nc5/Bf5/Nb4 (once White has played e3).
- [9] Black mates with either 31.Kf5 g6+ 32.Kf6 Bd4 mate, or 31. Kf3 Rf2 mate.
- [10] An interactive move list and diagram for the game is at [A Budapest Gambit Assault](#). (Scroll down after reaching that webpage. Also note the error there at move 31, since the actual game ended 31.Kf4 Be3+.)

## 12.5.12 Footnotes

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- [40] Lalic 1998, p.76
- [41] Lalic 1998, p.10
- [42] Moskalenko 2008, p.51–52
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- [122] Borik 1986, p.45  
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- [123] Tseitlin 1992, p.39
- [124] Lalic 1998, p.120
- [125] Lalic 1998, p.120  
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- [126] Tseitlin 1992, p.36
- [127] Lalic 1998, p.122
- [128] Moskalenko 2008, p.126  
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- [129] Borik 1986, p.60
- [130] Tseitlin 1992, p.89
- [131] Lalic calls it “undoubtedly the most critical line”. Lalic 1998, p.132
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- [134] Lalic 1998, p.139  
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- [135] “Hillarp Persson–Romero Holmes, Hotel Bali Stars 2003”. ChessGames.com.
- [136] Lalic 1998, p.143  
Kullamaa–Starke, Correspondence 1991
- [137] Borik 1986, p.91
- [138] Tseitlin 1992, p.96
- [139] Borik 1986, p.68
- [140] Lalic 1998, p.152
- [141] Borik 1986, p.84
- [142] According to Tseitlin, this idea first occurred in the game Baginskaite–Stroe, Vilnius 1986
- [143] Shereshevsky 1994, p. 21.
- [144] Lalic 1998, p.101  
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- [145] Lalic 1998, p.98–99  
Zwikowski–Gurieli, Genting Highlands 1990  
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- [147] Lalic 1998, p.127  
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- [148] Pachman, Ludek (1983). *Opening game in chess*. Routledge. ISBN 978-0-7100-9222-9.
- [149] Lalic 1998, p.129  
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- [150] Borik 1986, p.55
- [151] Tseitlin 1992, p.111  
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- [153] Tseitlin 1992, p.18
- [154] Tseitlin 1992, p.20
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- [156] Borik 1986, p.57
- [157] Tseitlin 1992, p.12, citing Kwiatkowski
- [158] Borik 1986, p.93
- [159] Tseitlin 1992, p.12
- [160] Tseitlin 1992, p.11, citing Schlechter
- [161] Borik 1986, p.94, citing Schlechter

- [162] Tseitlin 1992, p.11
- [163] “Menchik–Tartakower (Paris 1929)”.
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- Tim Harding (November 2000). “The Kibitzer: Playing the Budapest in Budapest” (PDF). ChessCafe.
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## 12.6 Lasker Trap

Position after 5...dxe3, setting the trap

The **Lasker Trap** is a chess opening trap in the Albin Countergambit, named after Emanuel Lasker, although it was first noted by Serafino Dubois (Hooper & Whyld 1996, p. 219).<sup>[1]</sup> It is unusual in that it features an underpromotion as early as the seventh move.

### 12.6.1 Analysis

#### 1. d4 d5 2. c4 e5

The Albin Countergambit.

### 3. dxe5 d4

The black pawn on d4 is stronger than it appears.

### 4. e3?

Careless. Usual and better is 4.Nf3.

### 4... Bb4+ 5. Bd2 dxe3! (see diagram)

Now White's best option is to accept doubled pawns with 6.fxe3.

### 6. Bxb4??

Blundering into the Lasker Trap. In an 1899 consultation game in Moscow, Blumenfeld, Boyarkow, and Falk playing White against Lasker tried 6.Qa4+?, but Black wins after this move also. The game continued 6...Nc6 7.Bxb4 Qh4 8.Ne2 Qxf2+ 9.Kd1 Bg4 10.Nc3 0-0-0+ 11.Bd6 cxd6 12.e6 fxe6 13.Kc1 Nf6 14.b4 d5 15.b5 Ne5 16.cxd5 Nxd5 17.Qc2 Nb4 18.Nd1+ Nxc2 19.Nxf2 Rd2 White resigned.

Position after 7...fxg1=N+!

The *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* (volume D) gives 6.fxe3 as the best move. Black gets a slight advantage, but White has avoided the worst and can defend.

### 6... exf2+

Now 7.Kxf2 would lose the queen to 7...Qxd1, so White must play 7.Ke2.

### 7. Ke2 fxg1=N+! (see diagram)

Underpromotion is the key to the trap. (If instead 7...fxg1=Q, then 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8 9.Rxg1 is okay for White.) Now 8.Rxg1 Bg4+ skewers White's queen, so the king must move again.

### 8. Ke1 Qh4+ 9. Kd2

The alternative, 9.g3, loses the h1-rook to the fork 9...Qe4+.

### 9... Nc6

White is hopelessly lost. After 10.Bc3, 10...Bg4 followed by 11...0-0-0+ is crushing.

## 12.6.2 See also

- List of chess traps

## 12.6.3 References

### Notes

- [1] Hooper & Whyld 1996 say that Dubois pointed out the trap in 1872 (p. 219). Although they don't specify where Dubois published the trap, it could refer to the three-volume work on the openings that Dubois published from 1868 to 1873 (p.116). Elsewhere they state that the Albin Countergambit was not introduced until 1881 (p. 6), which seems to be a contradiction. It isn't clear if the trap discovery date 1872 should perhaps instead be 1882, or if 1881 was the tournament introduction of an opening that had been published in 1872 or earlier.

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- Blumenfeld/Boyarkow/Falk vs Emanuel Lasker, Moscow 1899, retrieved 2008-01-24 (game score at chessgames.com)

## 12.7 Légal Trap

The **Légal Trap** or **Blackburne Trap** (also known as **Légal Pseudo-Sacrifice** and **Légal Mate**) is a chess opening trap, characterized by a queen sacrifice followed by checkmate with minor pieces if Black accepts the sacrifice. The trap is named after the French player Sire de Légal (1702–92). Joseph Henry Blackburne (1841–1924), a British master and one of the world's top five players in the latter part of the 19th century, set the trap on many occasions.

### 12.7.1 Natural move sequence

There are a number of ways the trap can arise, the one below shows a natural move sequence from a simultaneous exhibition in Paris. André Cheron, one of France's leading players, won with the trap as White against Jeanlose:

#### 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 d6

The Semi-Italian Opening.

#### 4. Nc3 Bg4?!

Black **pins** the **knight** in the fight over the center. Strategically this is a sound idea, but there is a tactical flaw with the move.

#### 5. h3

In this position 5.Nxe5? would be an *unsound* trap. While the white queen still cannot be taken (5...Bxd1??) without succumbing to a checkmate in two moves, 5...Nxe5 would win a knight (for the pawn). Instead, with 5.h3, White “puts the question” to the **bishop** which must either retreat on the c8–h3 diagonal, capture the knight, be captured, or as in this game, move to an insecure square.

#### 5... Bh5? (see diagram)

Black apparently maintains the pin, but this is a tactical blunder which loses at least a **pawn** (see below). Relatively best is 5...Bxf3, surrendering the bishop pair and giving White a comfortable lead in development, but maintaining material equality. 5...Be6!? is also possible.

#### 6. Nxe5!

The tactical refutation. White seemingly ignores the pin and surrenders the **queen**. Black’s best course now is to play 6...Nxe5, where with 7.Qxh5 Nxc4 8.Qb5+ followed by 9.Qxc4, White remains a pawn ahead, but Black can at least play on. Instead, if Black takes the queen, White has checkmate in two moves:

#### 6... Bxd1?? 7. Bxf7+ Ke7 8. Nd5#

The final position (see diagram) is a pure **mate**, meaning that for each of the eight squares around the black king, there is exactly one reason the king cannot move there.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 12.7.2 Légal versus Saint Brie

The original game featured Légal playing at **rook odds** (without Ra1)<sup>[2]</sup> against Saint Brie in Paris 1750:

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 d6 3. Bc4 Bg4?! 4. Nc3 g6? 5. Nxe5 Bxd1?? 6. Bxf7+ Ke7 7. Nd5# 1–0<sup>[3][4]</sup>

**Note:** the above is the move order found in most publications. However, Recent research published at Chessbase<sup>[5]</sup> suggests that the move order has been altered retrospectively in order to remove a flaw present in the original game. Also the date of 1750 is assumed to be wrong. It is more likely that the game has in fact been played in 1787, and the original move order was:

1. e4 e5 2. Bc4 d6 3. Nf3 Nc6 4. Nc3 Bg4 5. Nxe5? Bxd1?? 6. Bxf7+ Ke7 7. Nd5# 1–0

Here the “combination” is of course flawed, as with 5...Nxe5 (instead of falling for the trap) Black could have gained a piece for free... It is reported that Sire Légal disguised his trap with a “psychological trick”: he first touched the Knight on f3 and then retreated his hand as if realizing only now that the Knight was pinned. Then, after his opponent reminded him of the touch-move rule, he played Nxe5, and the opponent grabbed the Queen without thinking twice...

Strong evidence for the game indeed having been “rectified” retrospectively by book authors is the fact that 4... g6 (trying to fianchetto the King’s Bishop) is not a move that would have been played in the 18th century: the fianchetto is a “modern” invention.

### 12.7.3 Other variations

#### 12.7.4 Considerations

This kind of mate, where an apparently pinned knight moves anyway, allowing capture of the queen, but leading to a checkmate with minor pieces, occasionally occurs at lower levels of play, though masters would not normally fall for it. According to Bjerke (*Spillet i mitt liv*), the Légal Trap has ensnared countless unwary players. One author writes that “Blackburne sprang it several hundreds of times during his annual tours.”<sup>[8]</sup>

In general, making a “trap” by luring a bishop into a queen capture is not strictly necessary. Any game featuring an advanced knight and Bxf7+ (or ...Bxf2+) followed by mate with minor pieces would be considered a Légal Mate. The mate succeeds because the square of the advanced knight is unguarded, and the enemy king is blocked by several of its own pieces.

#### 12.7.5 See also

- Checkmate pattern

### 12.7.6 References

#### Notes

- [1] This version of the L gal Trap was presented in Andre Bjerke (1975). *Spillet i mitt liv* (in Norwegian). ISBN 82-03-07968-7.
- [2] George Walker, *A Selection of Games at Chess* (London: Gilbert and Rivington, 1835), p. 91.
- [3] Chessgames.com
- [4] Georges Renaud & Victor Kahn *The Art of Checkmate*; Dover 1962
- [5] Ren  Gralla, *Das Seekadetten-Matt: Original und F lschung* (<http://de.chessbase.com/post/das-seekadetten-matt-original-und-flschung>)
- [6] Hooper, Whyld (1987), p. 182
- [7] Hooper, Whyld (1987), p. 302
- [8] Francis J. Wellmuth *The Golden Treasury of Chess*; Chess Review 1943, p. 147.

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### 12.7.7 External links

- L gal Trap at Chessgames.com

## 12.8 Magnus Smith Trap

Position after 8.e5!

The **Magnus Smith Trap** is a chess opening trap in the Sicilian Defence, named after three-time Canadian chess champion Magnus Smith (1869–1934). In an article titled "'The Magnus Smith Trap'" published in his *Chess Notes* column (hosted at the Chess History Center), chess historian Edward Winter wrote: "We believe that 'Magnus Smith Trap' is a misnomer, although in the Sicilian Defence there is a 'Magnus Smith Variation' (a very rare instance of a player's forename and surname being used jointly in openings terminology)."

### 12.8.1 The trap

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 Nc6 6. Bc4

This is the Sozin (or Fischer) Variation of the Sicilian Defense. A common response is 6...e6, to make White's bishop on c4 "bite on granite".

6... g6?!

By playing 6...g6?!, Black falls into the trap.

7. Nxc6 bxc6 8. e5! (see diagram)

Black is in a bad way. After 8...Nh5?, Bobby Fischer gives 9.Qf3! e6 (9...d5 10.Nxd5!) 10.g4 Ng7 11.Ne4 Qa5+ (11...d5 12.Nf6+ Ke7 13.Qa3+) 12.Bd2 Qxe5 13.Bc3 and Black's queen is trapped. Preferable alternatives are 8...Ng4 9.e6 f5, and Black eventually managed to draw in Schlechter–Lasker, World Championship (7) 1910 and 8...d5 9.exf6 dxc4 10.Qxd8+ Kxd8 11.Bg5 Be6 12.0-0-0+ Ke8, and Black ultimately even won in Rosen–Burn, Paris 1900. The move Black actually chooses leads to instant disaster.

8... dxe5?? 9. Bxf7+

White wins Black's queen after 9...Kxf7 10.Qxd8.

### 12.8.2 References

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.
- Fischer, Bobby and Larry Evans (1969). *My 60 Memorable Games*. Simon and Schuster. LCCN 68055954.

## 12.9 Marshall Trap

Position after 10.Re1?; Black wins with 10...Bxh2+!

The **Marshall Trap** is a chess opening trap in Petrov's Defence named after Frank Marshall.

### 12.9.1 The trap

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6

The trap begins with Black playing Petrov's Defence.

3. Nxe5 d6 4. Nf3 Nxe4 5. d4 d5 6. Bd3 Bd6 7. 0-0 0-0  
8. c4 Bg4 9. cxd5 f5 10. Re1? (see diagram)

White should play 10.Nc3 instead.

10... Bxh2+!

An unexpected blow.

11. Kxh2 Nxf2

Black forks the white queen and bishop, forcing the queen to move.

12. Qe2 Nxd3 13. Qxd3 Bxf3 14. Qxf3 Qh4+

Followed by Qxe1 winning the e1-rook. Black has a winning material advantage.

### 12.9.2 References

- Hooper, David and Kenneth Whyld (1996). *The Oxford Companion to Chess*. Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.

## 12.10 Monticelli Trap

In chess, the **Monticelli Trap** is a combination in the **Bogo-Indian Defence**, named for Italian champion Mario Monticelli from the game Monticelli versus Prokeš, Budapest 1926.<sup>[1]</sup> Although it is called a trap because White wins the exchange, Black does obtain some compensation.

The trap begins with the moves:

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nf3 Bb4+

Black plays the Bogo-Indian Defence.

4. Bd2 Bxd2+

5. Qxd2 b6
6. g3 Bb7
7. Bg2 O-O
8. Nc3 Ne4
9. Qc2 Nxc3
10. Ng5! (see diagram)

### 12.10.1 Discussion

White threatens mate with 11.Qxh7# as well as 11.Bxb7 winning a bishop and a rook. After either 10...Ne4 11.Bxe4 or 10...Qxg5 11.Bxb7, Black loses the exchange, but obtains compensation in the form of one or more pawns and possibly a weakened white king. It is unclear if the position is a forced win for White.

Former world champion **José Raúl Capablanca** allowed 10.Ng5 twice in consecutive games as Black against **Max Euwe** in **Amsterdam**, 1931, drawing both times. The second game continued:<sup>[2]</sup>

10...Ne4 11.Bxe4 Bxe4 12.Qxe4 Qxg5 13.Qxa8 Nc6 14.Qb7 Nxd4 15.Rd1 c5 16.e3 Nc2+ 17.Kd2 Qf5 18.Qg2 Nb4 19.e4 Qf6 20.Kc1 Nxa2+ 21.Kb1 Nb4 22.Rxd7 Nc6 23.f4 e5 24.Rhd1 Nd4 25.Rxa7 exf4 26.gxf4 Qxf4 27.Re1 Nf3 28.Re2 Nd4 29.Re1 ½–½

The line has been played several times over the years at the highest levels, including Portisch–Andersson 1983,<sup>[3]</sup> which ended in a draw, and Aronian–Postny 2005,<sup>[4]</sup> which White won. The offer of the exchange has in fact been refused by White in grandmaster games (either by 10.Qxc3 or 10.Ng5 Ne4 11.Bxe4 Bxe4 12.Nxe4<sup>[5]</sup>).

### 12.10.2 See also

- List of chess openings named after people

### 12.10.3 References

#### Notes

- [1] Monticelli vs. Prokeš, 1926
- [2] Euwe vs. Capablanca, 1931
- [3] Portisch vs. Andersson, 1983
- [4] Aronian vs. Postny, 2005
- [5] Psakhis vs. Marin, 2005

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### 12.10.4 External links

## 12.11 Mortimer Trap

Position after 5...c6. Black wins a piece.

The **Mortimer Trap** is a chess opening trap in the Ruy Lopez named after James Mortimer. The Mortimer Trap is a true trap in the sense that Black deliberately plays an inferior move hoping to trick White into making a mistake.

### 12.11.1 Analysis

#### 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nf6

The trap begins with Black playing the **Berlin Defense** to the Ruy Lopez. Although the Berlin was much more popular in the 19th century than in the 20th, it “became the height of theory when Vladimir Kramnik used it as his main defense to defeat Garry Kasparov in their 2000 World Championship match.”<sup>[1]</sup>

#### 4. d3

White plays a quiet alternative to the more common 4.0-0, 4.d4, or 4.Nc3 (the last would transpose to the **Four Knights Game**). I. A. Horowitz and Fred Reinfeld wrote that 4.d3 is “Steinitz’s move, with which he scored many spectacular successes during his long reign as World Champion.”<sup>[2]</sup>

#### 4... Ne7

The Mortimer Defense, intending to reroute the knight to g6. This rare move loses time and thus is inferior to other moves, but it sets a trap. White has many acceptable replies, but the tempting capture of the black pawn on e5 is a mistake.

#### 5. Nxe5? c6! (see diagram)

Attacking the white bishop and threatening 6...Qa5+. If the bishop moves (6.Ba4 or 6.Bc4), Black wins a piece with 6...Qa5+, forking the white king and knight.

#### 6. Nc4

White’s best try, covering a5 and thus preventing 6...Qa5+, and threatening smothered mate with 7.Nd6#.

#### 6... d6! 7. Ba4 b5

Black forks the white bishop and knight, winning a piece for two pawns.

### 12.11.2 Discussion

Mortimer played his defense at the 1883 London tournament against Berthold Englisch, Samuel Rosenthal, and Josef Noa, losing all three games.<sup>[3]</sup> Johannes Zukertort, the tournament winner, also played it against Englisch, the game resulting in a draw.<sup>[4]</sup> Zukertort wrote of 4...Ne7, “Mr. Mortimer claims to be the inventor of this move. I adopted it on account of its novelty.”<sup>[5]</sup> The first edition of the treatise *Chess Openings, Ancient and Modern* analyzed 5.Nc3 Ng6 6.0-0 c6 7.Ba4 d6 8.Bb3 and now the authors gave either 8...Be6 or 8...Be7 as giving Black an equal game.<sup>[6]</sup> A bit more recently, Horowitz and Reinfeld observed of 4...Ne7, “This time-wasting retreat of the Knight to an inferior square blocks the development of the King Bishop ... . Yet it is a matter of record that this pitfall had a vogue for many years.”<sup>[2]</sup>

Today, 4...Ne7 is rarely seen, and is not mentioned in either *Modern Chess Openings* (which relegates 4.d3 to a footnote, and mentions only 4...d6 in response)<sup>[7]</sup> or the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings* (which mentions only 4...d6 and 4...Bc5).<sup>[8]</sup>

### 12.11.3 References

#### Notes

- [1] De Firmian 2008, p. 43.
- [2] Horowitz & Reinfeld 1954, p. 59.
- [3] Minchin 1973, pp. 179, 257, 306.
- [4] Englisch–Zukertort
- [5] Minchin 1973, p. 22.
- [6] Freeborough & Ranken 1889, p. 127.

[7] De Firmian 2008, p. 48.

[8] ECO, pp. 332–33.

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- De Firmian, Nick (2008). *Modern Chess Openings* (15th ed.). Random House. ISBN 978-0-8129-3682-7.
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## 12.12 Noah's Ark Trap

Position after 11...c4. The white king bishop is trapped.

The **Noah's Ark Trap** is a chess opening trap in the Ruy Lopez. The name is actually used to describe a family of traps in the Ruy Lopez in which a white bishop is trapped on the b3-square by black pawns.

### 12.12.1 Discussion

The origin of the name is uncertain. The shape of the black pawns on a6, b5, and c4 may resemble an ark, or the name may suggest that the trap is "as old as Noah's Ark".

Even chess masters have occasionally fallen victim to this trap. An example is a game between Endre Steiner and José Capablanca at the Budapest tournament in 1929:<sup>[1]</sup>

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 d6 5. d4

Better moves for White are 5.c3, 5.Bxc6+, and 5.0-0.

5... b5 6. Bb3 Nxd4 7. Nxd4 exd4 8. Qxd4??

Alexander Alekhine recommended this move in the tournament book for New York 1924 as a means for White to draw, but it is a mistake that loses material. White should instead play 8.Bd5 or try a gambit with 8.c3.

8... c5 9. Qd5 Be6 10. Qc6+ Bd7 11. Qd5 c4  
(see diagram)

The white king bishop is trapped.  
White resigned after 32 moves.

### In the Sicilian

A variation of this trap can occur in the Sicilian Defense after the moves 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 (the Rossolimo Variation) a6 4.Ba4?? (4.Bxc6 is necessary and the point of 3.Bb5 itself) b5 5.Bb3 c4 (see diagram) and the bishop is similarly trapped.

Position after 4.Ba4?? b5 5.Bb3 c4

### 12.12.2 Notes

[1] Steiner–Capablanca, Budapest 1929 at Chessgames.com

### 12.12.3 References

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1996), *The Oxford Companion to Chess*, Oxford University, p. 274, ISBN 0-19-280049-3

## 12.13 Rubinstein Trap

White wins a pawn with 13.Nxd5.

The **Rubinstein Trap** is a chess opening trap in the Queen's Gambit Declined, Orthodox Defense. Black loses a pawn after Nxd5 due to the threat of his queen being trapped on the back rank by White's Bc7.

### 12.13.1 History

The trap takes its name from Akiba Rubinstein, who had the misfortune of falling into it twice, in the games Max Euwe–Rubinstein, Bad Kissingen 1928, and Alexander Alekhine–Rubinstein, San Remo 1930. Rubinstein was not the first to fall victim to the trap; the first recorded game featuring the trap is Amos Burn–Heinrich Wolf, Ostend 1905.

Alekhine–Rubinstein, San Remo 1930<sup>[1]</sup>

**1. d4 d5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. c4 e6**

The Queen's Gambit Declined, Orthodox Defense.

**4. Bg5 Nbd7 5. e3 Be7 6. Nc3 0-0 7. Rc1 Re8  
8. Qc2 a6 9. cxd5 exd5 10. Bd3 c6 11. 0-0 Ne4  
12. Bf4 f5?** (see diagram)

Black falls into the trap.

**13. Nxd5**

White wins a pawn since 13...cxd5?? loses to 14.Bc7, trapping Black's queen.

## 12.13.2 Notes

- [1] Alexander Alekhine vs Akiba Rubinstein, San Remo (1930) Chessgames.com

## 12.13.3 References

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# 12.14 Siberian Trap

This article is about the chess opening. For the geophysical feature, see [Siberian Traps](#).

The **Siberian Trap** is a chess opening trap. After a series of natural moves in the Smith–Morra Gambit of the Sicilian Defence, White can lose a queen. The name appears to result from Boris Schipkov of Novosibirsk in southwestern Siberia.

The trap has occurred at least twice in tournament play: Kolenbet–Schipkov, [Khabarovsk](#) 1987, and Tesinsky–Magerramov, [Budapest](#) 1990.

## 12.14.1 Analysis

**1. e4 c5**

The Sicilian Defence.

**2. d4 cxd4 3. c3 dxc3**

White's 3.c3 introduces the Smith–Morra Gambit. Black accepts the [gambit pawn](#).

**4. Nxc3 Nc6 5. Nf3 e6 6. Bc4 Qc7 7. 0-0 Nf6 8. Qe2**

White prepares e4–e5. This move is playable *if* White is careful on the next move. After 8.Re1 Bc5 Black has a good game as White's f2-square is sensitive. White also doesn't achieve much after 8.h3 a6. Instead, NCO suggests 8.Nb5 Qb8 9.e5 Nxe5 10.Nxe5 Qxe5 11.Re1 and White has some compensation for the sacrificed pawns.

**8... Ng4! 9. h3??** (see diagram)

This is a decisive mistake. The same fate befell White after 9.Bb3?? in Kramadzhian–Schipkov, Novosibirsk 1988. Another try that doesn't work is 9.Rd1 Bc5. MCO-14 recommends 9.Nb5! Qb8 (threatening 10...a6 11.Nc3 Nd4!) 10.h3 h5 11.g3 Nge5 12.Nxe5 Nxe5 13.Bf4 a6 with a sharp position with roughly equal chances.

**9... Nd4!**

The Black threat of 10...Nxf3+ followed by 11...Qh2# wins material. If 10.Nxd4 then 10...Qh2#.

## 12.14.2 References

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- Langrock, Hannes (2006). *The Modern Morra Gambit: A Dynamic Weapon Against the Sicilian*. Russell Enterprises. ISBN 1-888690-32-1.

## 12.14.3 External links

- [Chess Siberia](#)

## 12.15 Tarrasch Trap

**Tarrasch Trap** refers to two different chess opening traps in the **Ruy Lopez** that are named for Siegbert Tarrasch. Unlike many variations that appear only in analysis, Tarrasch actually sprung his traps against masters in tournament games.

### 12.15.1 Tarrasch Trap in the Open Variation

Position after 11...Qd7? White wins a piece.

Two masters actually fell for this trap against Tarrasch: Johannes Zukertort at Frankfurt in 1887 and Isidor Gunsberg at Manchester in 1890.

**1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. 0-0 Nxe4**

This is the **Open Variation** of the Ruy Lopez.

**6. d4 b5 7. Bb3 d5 8. dxe5 Be6 9. c3 Be7 10. Re1 0-0 11. Nd4 Qd7?** (see diagram)

Falling into the trap.

**12. Nxe6**

Black's pawn on d5 will be pinned (along the d-file or along the a2–g8 diagonal) no matter how he recaptures. After 12...Qxe6 or 12...fxe6 White wins a piece with 13.Rxe4.

### 12.15.2 Tarrasch Trap in the Steinitz Variation

The second Tarrasch Trap, sometimes referred to as the Dresden Trap, occurs in the **Steinitz Variation**. Tarrasch published analysis of this trap in 1891, but 18 months later Georg Marco fell into it in Tarrasch versus Marco, Dresden 1892.<sup>[1]</sup> Tarrasch spent just five minutes thinking during the entire game.

Position after 7.Re1. Now 7...0-0? falls into the trap.

**1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 d6**

This is the Steinitz Variation of the Ruy Lopez.

**4. d4 Bd7**

Black breaks the pin to meet the threat of 5.d5.

**5. Nc3 Nf6 6. 0-0 Be7 7. Re1** (see diagram)

Laying a subtle trap. **Castling** seems natural for Black but it loses a pawn. Instead, 7...exd4 is better.

**7... 0-0? 8. Bxc6 Bxc6 9. dxe5 dxe5 10. Qxd8 Raxd8 11. Nxe5**

Black's best move here is probably 11...Bd7, although White would remain a pawn ahead.

**11... Bxe4?! 12. Nxe4 Nxe4**

White can go astray too, 13.Rxe4?? would be a horrible blunder as Black would checkmate with 13...Rd1+ 14. Re1 Rxe1#. White blocks that possibility with his next move, making the threat real against the black knight on e4.

**13. Nd3 f5**

The black knight cannot move because of the pin against the bishop on e7.

**14. f3 Bc5+?!**

Better is 14...Bh4 15.g3 Nxg3 16.hxg3 Bxg3 where Black get two pawns for the knight.

**15. Nxc5 Nxc5 16. Bg5 Rd5 17. Be7 Re8 18. c4 1-0**

White wins at least the exchange, so Marco resigned.

### 12.15.3 Notes

[1] Tarrasch versus Marco

### 12.15.4 References

- Hooper, David; Whyld, Kenneth (1992). "Tarrasch Trap". *The Oxford Companion to Chess* (2nd ed.). Oxford University. ISBN 0-19-280049-3.

## 12.16 Würzburger Trap

5...Qh4+ “initiates ' Würzburger's Trap'.” (Korn)

The **Würzburger Trap** is a chess opening trap in the Vienna Gambit. It was named around 1930 for German banker Max Würzburger.

### 12.16.1 The trap

1. e4 e5 2. Nc3 Nf6 3. f4

White plays the Vienna Gambit.

3... d5

Thought to be the best reply.

4. fxe5 Nxe4 5. d3

White also has lines beginning 5.Qf3 (Steinitz) and 5.Nf3, but neither achieves an advantage.<sup>[1]</sup>

5... Qh4+?

Initiating the trap. Black has other choices 5...Bb4 and 5...Nxc3.<sup>[2]</sup>

6. g3 Nxg3 7. Nf3 Qh5 8. Nxd5 Bg4

8...Nxh1? 9.Nxc7+ Kd8 10.Nxa8 leads to advantage for White.<sup>[2]</sup>

Position after 12.b3. The bishop on c2 is lost.

9. Nf4

White can obtain the better game with 9.Bg2 Nxh1 (9...Bxf3 10.Qxf3 Qxe5+ 11.Kd1 Nxh1 12.Bf4 Qxb2 13.Qe4+ +- Hamann-Schvenkrantz, Germany 1965; 10...Qxf3 11.Bxf3 Nxa1 12.Nxc7+ Kd7 13.Nxa8 Bc5 14.Bxh1 Nc6 15.Bf4± Arhangel'skij-Popov, USSR 1958; Larsen)<sup>[3]</sup> 10.Nxc7+ Kd7 (10...Kd8 11.Nxa8 Nc6 12.d4 Bxf3 13.Qxf3 Qxf3 14.Bxf3 Nxd4 15.Bg5+ Be7 16.Rd1+-; Larsen)<sup>[3]</sup> 11.Nxa8 Nc6.<sup>[2][4]</sup>

9... Bxf3 10. Nxh5 Bxd1 11. hxg3 Bxc2?

Black tries to win a pawn, but instead loses a piece.

12. b3 (see diagram)

The black bishop on c2 is trapped; White will win it by playing Kd2 next turn.

### 12.16.2 References

#### Notes

- [1] Horowitz (1964), pp. 221–22
- [2] Korn (1982), p. 105
- [3] Matanović, Aleksandar, ed. (1981). *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* C (2nd ed.). Yugoslavia: Chess Informant. p. 145.
- [4] Horowitz (1964), p. 222

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### 12.16.3 Further reading

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## Chapter 13

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- **Fried Liver Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two\\_Knights\\_Defense%2C\\_Fried\\_Liver\\_Attack?oldid=703359051](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two_Knights_Defense%2C_Fried_Liver_Attack?oldid=703359051) *Contributors:* Eric119, SmilingBoy, Discospinster, ZeroOne, Foobaz, Quale, NeonMerlin, Bubba73, Bob Hu, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Cream147, Zickzack, Perlnerd666, Anonywiki, Black Kite, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, OTAVIO1981, Blahblah5555, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Smbc555, Geertdd, Addbot, Yobot, Marc Schroeder, MrsHudson, Superyetkin, Locobot, Adrignola, EmausBot, ZéroBot, ChuispastonBot, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Eug.baranov, Frietjes, Abdooss, Theemathas, Aaronaraujo2013, Muhammad Areez, Kingchessraider, SaxXiz and Anonymous: 32
- **Giucoco Piano** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giuoco\\_Piano?oldid=709871537](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giuoco_Piano?oldid=709871537) *Contributors:* GCarty, Furrykef, Robbot, Djinn112, No Guru, Bob.v.R, H Padleckas, ThreeE, Stupid girl, ZeroOne, Chvsanchez, Shoka, Bantman, Jacobolus, Sjakalle, Quale, ABot, Bubba73, Salvatore Ingala, Bgwhite, YurikBot, Giro720, Krakatoa, Rcinda1, Cobblet, SmackBot, TimBentley, Tscabot, Shalom Yechiel, Eynar, Ligulembot, Myasuda, MC10, Thijs!bot, Tws45, JAnDbot, Husond, RebelRobot, Omerzu, MaxBrowne, OTAVIO1981, Flyer22 Reborn, Moonraker12, Hsf-toshiba, Capitalismojo, M4gnum0n, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Niemzowitsch, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Yobot, TaBOT-zerem, Citation bot, Spaidaris, Adrignola, FrescoBot, CarlesMartin, Krossfire38, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Esculenta, Cthombor, Bever, Shreyas61196, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 44
- **Evans Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evans\\_Gambit?oldid=711598226](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evans_Gambit?oldid=711598226) *Contributors:* Camembert, GCarty, Furrykef, Finlay McWalter, Smb1001, No Guru, Andris, Neile, Gordoni, ThreeE, Discospinster, Samboy, CanisRufus, TheHungryTiger, Ire and curses, CygnusPius, Jacobolus, Fenya-enwiki, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, OpenToppedBus, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Jimerb, That Guy, From That Show!, Dumiace, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, SashatoBot, Phoenixrod, Thijs!bot, Tws45, Happily ever after, Magioladitis, Pawnkingthree, Darklama, Idioma-bot, TXiKiBoT, Rei-bot, MaxBrowne, Moonraker12, Oxymoron83, Fratrep, Sersunzo, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Against the current, Lab-oratory, Crat, Addbot, AndersBot, Lightbot, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Greg Holden 08, Citation bot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Cekli829, Ripchip Bot, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Elmarius, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Eric M Shore, Toccata quarta, Omid.espero, Barnabas1717 and Anonymous: 35
- **Italian Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian\\_Gambit?oldid=642529183](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Gambit?oldid=642529183) *Contributors:* ThreeE, ZeroOne, Pion, Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, TimBentley, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, Dgies, Gioto, Tws45, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Cuaxdon, Citation bot, Spaidaris, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 4
- **Irish Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish\\_Gambit?oldid=641779180](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_Gambit?oldid=641779180) *Contributors:* Macaddct1984, Quale, Krakatoa, Wknight94, Cobblet, Hibbleton, Shalom Yechiel, Alaibot, Mlsutton, Chesslover96, SilvonenBot, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Yobot, Spaidaris, MrsHudson, BukMer, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 3

- **Jerome Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giuoco\\_Piano%2C\\_Jerome\\_Gambit?oldid=701494702](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giuoco_Piano%2C_Jerome_Gambit?oldid=701494702) *Contributors:* Bubba73, Krakatoa, Cobblet, JudahH, MaxBrowne, Sun Creator, XLinkBot, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Yobot, MrsHudson, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Bever, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 12
- **Blackburne Shilling Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian\\_Game%2C\\_Blackburne\\_Shilling\\_Gambit?oldid=650537690](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Game%2C_Blackburne_Shilling_Gambit?oldid=650537690) *Contributors:* Bjimba, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Cmdrjameson, Goatbear, Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, SmackBot, Melchoir, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, Rigadoun, Xeno, Knulclunk, WarddrBOT, Voorlandt, Artichoker, Sun Creator, Addbot, Lightbot, Lucas-bot, AnomieBOT, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Updatehelper, Ihardlythinkso, Sean Quixote, Frietjes and Anonymous: 10
- **Scotch Game** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotch\\_Game?oldid=694605131](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotch_Game?oldid=694605131) *Contributors:* GCarty, Robbot, No Guru, Neile, Sonjaaa, Bob.v.R, ZeroOne, CygnusPius, Feny~enwiki, Zoz, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Matt Deres, Nihiltres, WTHarvey, Roboto de Ajvol, Krakatoa, Rcinda1, Acwazytomato, Cobblet, Jonasfagundes, Eric Guez, Gaspar van der Sar, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Animalzhu, Banedon, ShelfSkewed, Myasuda, WinBot, Tws45, Magioladitis, Vadimka~enwiki, Idioma-bot, TXiKiBoT, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Richard reti, ParaGreen13, Lab-oratory, Balokrop~enwiki, Addbot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Zorrobot, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Amirobot, Ulric1313, Citation bot, ArthurBot, Xqbot, GrandMattster, MrsHudson, PiFanic, Adrignola, Johnmcmullin, BukMer, TobeBot, ZéroBot, Lazardel, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Jogmiers, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, Makecat-bot, PMC 57, Shreyas61196 and Anonymous: 47
- **Ponziani Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponziani\\_Opening?oldid=709687675](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponziani_Opening?oldid=709687675) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Mswake, Chowbok, ZeroOne, Wareh, Sjakkalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, Tommy Kronkvist, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Cobblet, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, SashatoBot, RTejedor, Rigadoun, Sasata, Eastfrisian, Thijs!bot, Tws45, Michig, SyG, BrianWall, FruitMonkey, Anonywiki, Hugo999, Rossen3, TXiKiBoT, Falcon8765, Phil wink, Artichoker, Sun Creator, Addbot, Ronald Reuel, Tassedethe, Tide rolls, Kiril Simeonovski, Legobot, Lucas-bot, Yobot, AnomieBOT, Ulric1313, Marc Schroeder, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Citation bot 1, Faceless Enemy, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, AvvocatoBot, Toccata quarta, Ponz111, Mrshroom29, Monkbob and Anonymous: 14
- **Inverted Hungarian Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inverted\\_Hungarian\\_Opening?oldid=641779173](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inverted_Hungarian_Opening?oldid=641779173) *Contributors:* Arvindn, ZeroOne, Quale, Bubba73, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, PipepBot, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Citation bot, BukMer, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 4
- **Konstantinopsky Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konstantinopsky\\_Opening?oldid=649202460](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konstantinopsky_Opening?oldid=649202460) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Asparagus, Sonjaaa, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Quale, Bubba73, That Guy, From That Show!, Shalom Yechiel, R'n'B, VolkovBot, OTAVIO1981, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Yobot, Citation bot, Spaiders, MrsHudson, BukMer, LegesRomanorum, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Chessmasterguy and Anonymous: 7
- **Three Knights Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three\\_Knights\\_Opening?oldid=641786684](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Knights_Opening?oldid=641786684) *Contributors:* Stephen Gilbert, Rholton, Sonjaaa, ZeroOne, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, Welsh, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, SashatoBot, Rigadoun, Eastfrisian, Cream147, Thijs!bot, RaNdOm26, anacondabot, TXiKiBoT, DragonBot, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Addbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Amirobot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, BattyBot and Anonymous: 10
- **Four Knights Game** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four\\_Knights\\_Game?oldid=711708549](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Knights_Game?oldid=711708549) *Contributors:* Zundark, Furrykef, No Guru, Grutter, ZeroOne, Knuemo2, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Matt Deres, Falphin, YurikBot, William Caputo, Krakatoa, Bluebot, Colonies Chris, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, SashatoBot, Banedon, ShelfSkewed, Lausey, Thijs!bot, RaNdOm26, Ghmyrtle, JAnDbot, Kitaro2006, Magioladitis, Icenine378, Elite Warrior, TXiKiBoT, ClueBot, Neles, PixelBot, Sun Creator, SilvonenBot, Addbot, Numbo3-bot, Lightbot, Lucas-bot, Bourge, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, HamburgerRadio, Þjóðólfr, WTM, Zerkroz, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, BattyBot, RynMasters, Monkbob, Kukkie, ASM999, Awesome Days and Anonymous: 28
- **Halloween Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halloween\\_Gambit?oldid=710456991](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halloween_Gambit?oldid=710456991) *Contributors:* Furrykef, Jinnentonik, ThreeE, ZeroOne, Cmdrjameson, Gene Nygaard, Sjakkalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, Falphin, Krakatoa, Shalom Yechiel, NapoleonB, Ninetyone, ColorOfSuffering, DrKay, MaxBrowne, Mr. Granger, SpikeToronto, Sun Creator, Egmontaz, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Favonian, Jaydec, Yobot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Double sharp, Josve05a, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, BG19bot, Toccata quarta, Ginsuloft and Anonymous: 42
- **Philidor Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philidor\\_Defence?oldid=681906523](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philidor_Defence?oldid=681906523) *Contributors:* Camembert, RedWolf, Asparagus, No Guru, Varlaam, D6, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, BrokenSegue, Woohookitty, Jacobolus, GregorB, Isnow, Feny~enwiki, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Cobblet, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Reedy, Skizzik, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, MTSbot~enwiki, RaNdOm26, Mack2, Albmont, Anonywiki, Pawnkingthree, Black Kite, VolkovBot, TXiKiBoT, YonaBot, Swedish fusilier, Topsaint, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, Rapanui73, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Spaiders, LilHelpa, Gypsydave5, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, RedBot, TjBot, Ihardlythinkso, Verman1, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, ChrisGualtieri and Anonymous: 30
- **Elephant Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elephant\\_Gambit?oldid=704859568](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elephant_Gambit?oldid=704859568) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Infrogmation, Clemwang, ZeroOne, Wareh, Camitommy, Interiot, Quale, Bubba73, Cjpuffin, Krakatoa, Cobblet, Eskimbot, Persian Poet Gal, Brittle heaven, Shalom Yechiel, Rigadoun, Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, Yurell, JAnDbot, Conspiracy, VolkovBot, Kilori, Andrarias, OTAVIO1981, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Mann jess, MrsHudson, Oyp, Mathonius, Adrignola, Inox-en, ZéroBot, Zdenek2, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Jerzy Konikowski, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 23
- **Damiano Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Damiano\\_Defence?oldid=701495176](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Damiano_Defence?oldid=701495176) *Contributors:* Camembert, Dwheeler, Donarreiskoffer, Tom harrison, Mike Rosoft, ThreeE, Modargo, ZeroOne, Wareh, Jeffrey O. Gustafson, OwenX, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Falphin, YurikBot, Grifter84, The Ogre, Krakatoa, Zwobot, Sam Sloan, Cobblet, Melchoir, Thrashbarg, Shalom Yechiel, Samscone, MTSbot~enwiki, Matthew Proctor, JAnDbot, RebelRobot, VolkovBot, TXiKiBoT, Jckuli, Artichoker, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Jean.julius, Ulric1313, Adrignola, Double sharp, Kolobocheck, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, ChessPlayerLev, Moggism, Eliseo 3.14, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 27
- **Greco Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco\\_Defence?oldid=641422670](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco_Defence?oldid=641422670) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Jfire, Dersen, Sonjaaa, Anythingyouwant, ThreeE, Discospinster, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Stormbay, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Przemek Jahr, Zorro CX, Omerzu, Black Kite, PipepBot, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Yobot, Spaiders, Adrignola, Redzest, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Jellefar, Adrianjaepoblete, PMC 57 and Anonymous: 11

- **Gunderam Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunderam\\_Defense?oldid=634331210](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunderam_Defense?oldid=634331210) *Contributors:* GTBacchus, Quale, Bubba73, SmackBot, Roberto Cruz, Hmains, Chris the speller, Ioannes Pragensis, SyG, SieBot, Mr. Stradivarius, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Yobot, AnomieBOT, MrsHudson, Adrignola, DrillBot, Ihardlythinkso and Anonymous: 2
- **Latvian Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latvian\\_Gambit?oldid=707357277](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latvian_Gambit?oldid=707357277) *Contributors:* AxelBoldt, Zundark, Eclecticology, Arvindn, Fritzlein, Camembert, Pizza Puzzle, Jason Potter, Andris, Neile, Mackeriv, OwenBlacker, Xezbeth, Samboy, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Causa sui, Arcadian, Jacobolus, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Gaius Cornelius, Msikma, Krakatoa, Cobblet, SmackBot, Jon513, Shalom Yechiel, Smith609, MTSbot-enwiki, Eastfrisian, HisSpaceResearch, Red 81, Thijs!bot, Mack2, Tws45, Michig, Omerzu, Anonywiki, STBotD, Vestboy Myst, MaxBrowne, SieBot, Goliadkin, Sun Creator, Addbot, DFS454, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, ScAvenger, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Shotcallerballerballer, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Cekli829, Hushpuckena, Tabbelio, Double sharp, Grondilu, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Primergrey, Green Rain, K9re11, GretDrabba, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 32
- **Rousseau Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian\\_Game%2C\\_Rousseau\\_Gambit?oldid=641422546](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Game%2C_Rousseau_Gambit?oldid=641422546) *Contributors:* Robbot, ThreeE, ZeroOne, Quale, Bubba73, Algebraist, Krakatoa, TimBentley, Persian Poet Gal, Shalom Yechiel, A4bot, OTAVIO1981, Dpeinador-enwiki, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Yobot, Sisyph, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, KWiki and Anonymous: 7
- **Petrov's Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrov%27s\\_Defence?oldid=674754871](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrov%27s_Defence?oldid=674754871) *Contributors:* Camembert, MathMartin, No Guru, Ezhiki, Neile, Andycjp, Sonjaaa, Karol Langner, Elroch, ThreeE, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Fermatprime, Knucmo2, Mailer diablo, Zshzn, Bunchofgrapes, Sjakalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, FlaBot, BonfireBuddhist, YurikBot, RussBot, Billbrock, Introgressive, Krakatoa, Bota47, Rcinda1, William Allen Simpson, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, SashatoBot, Thijs!bot, .anacondabot, Albmont, Yonidebot, Inquam, Lycte, IdiomaBot, VolkovBot, TXiKiBoT, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, ClanCC, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, LaaknorBot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Yoavd, HerculeBot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Ptboutgourou, Ulric1313, August75, MrsHudson, Sirgorpster, Adrignola, BukMer, FrescoBot, Citation bot 1, TjBot, Pete Hobbs, ZéroBot, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Toccata quarta, Vanischenu, BattyBot, GretDrabba, Monkbot, Chessmasterguy and Anonymous: 52
- **Sicilian Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence?oldid=710129899](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence?oldid=710129899) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Camembert, Ubiquity, Bde-sham, Dougmeritt, Furrykef, Cabalamat, Webhat, GreatWhiteNortherner, Ludraman, Djinn112, No Guru, Neile, Andycjp, Sonjaaa, Ehamberg, ThreeE, Modargo, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Chvsanchez, Causa sui, Fooabz, Kingsindian, Knucmo2, Wendell, Gblaz, Eli the Bearded, Jaber-nal, Smackfu, WojciechSwiderski-enwiki, Adrian.benko, CygnusPius, Brian Merz, Jacobolus, Tabletop, GregorB, Dionyziz, Fenya-enwiki, Qwertyus, Zoz, AllanBz, Sjakalle, Koavf, Quale, Zbxgscqf, Bubba73, Wragge, FlaBot, Wknight8111, Jamesfisher, WarmasterKron, Yurik-Bot, RobotE, Hairy Dude, RussBot, Cryptic, Frederick R, Introgressive, Krakatoa, Misza13, Georgeslegoupier, Cobblet, Mebden, Meegs, John Broughton, FrozenPurpleCube, DT29, SmackBot, Slashme, Fetofs, Timneu22, Kscheffler, Colonies Chris, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Dumpendebat, Okino, Lambiam, BrownHairedGirl, Bendybenly, Ravenous75, JoeBot, Igoldste, Origin415, Cryptic C62, Duduong, CmdrObot, Myasuda, Gogo Dodo, KnightMove, Storeye, Thijs!bot, Barticus88, Chipka, Tourdeforcex, AntiVandalBot, Theriffleman62, Mbjoker, SmokeyTheCat, JAnDbot, Michig, Sawdichtel, .anacondabot, Omerzu, Baccyak4H, Rugops, Andy4226uk, Whatteaux, Philcha, Maurice Carbonaro, Miltonkeynes, FruitMonkey, Anonywiki, Plasticup, Black Kite, VolkovBot, Greatdebtor, Rossen3, TXiKiBoT, Trimagna, MaxBrowne, Shirleyepaul, Mightymax1, SieBot, YonaBot, 1e4c5, Abhishikt, Joe Gatt, Baseball Bugs, WilhelmHH-enwiki, Undoubtedly0, Daverose31, WikiLaurent, Prasanthv88, Swedish fusilier, Peanut4, Piledhigheranddeeper, SpikeToronto, Sun Creator, MacedonianBoy, 7&6=thirteen, Flesh-flake, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Masugly, Reesmf, Addbot, LaaknorBot, LinkFA-Bot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Matěj Grabovský, Mohsenkazempur, CountryBot, Ben Ben, Luckas-bot, Rpattabi, Yobot, AnomieBOT, Ulric1313, Flewis, Citation bot, Eaglebreath, ArthurBot, Mgc06, Xqbot, MrsHudson, FadulJoseArabe, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, FrescoBot, Crete2251, Citation bot 1, Dan Quigley, Geof-freybernardo, Pjódólf, Fryedk, TobeBot, Trappist the monk, Aoidh, Sgravn, Kingofthevegetablepeople, TjBot, EmausBot, Cheeky25, Not Accessible, Grondilu, ZéroBot, H3llBot, Carmarten, Aschwole, Brandmeister, Postprehistoric, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Amymoten, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Toccata quarta, Proxyma, BattyBot, Dexbot, Vnkn, Thatnamepleasedont, Monkbot, Greavg, Randomwikiuser2342, Asdklf, TheCoffeeAddict, Chessmasterguy, Willneibergall, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 188
- **Sicilian Defence, Alapin Variation** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence%2C\\_Alapin\\_Variation?oldid=663192152](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence%2C_Alapin_Variation?oldid=663192152) *Contributors:* Zundark, Andycjp, CanisRufus, Brian Merz, Bubba73, Welsh, Krakatoa, TimBentley, Shalom Yechiel, Petrichor, AlaiBot, Baselbonsai, Onlynone, Anonywiki, MaxBrowne, SieBot, Ikaria, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, HRoestBot, EmausBot, MikeyMouse10, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot and Anonymous: 13
- **Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence%2C\\_Dragon\\_Variation?oldid=710763938](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence%2C_Dragon_Variation?oldid=710763938) *Contributors:* Webhat, No Guru, H Padleckas, Mooseboy, Martpol, Modargo, ZeroOne, Knucmo2, Gene Nygaard, Mandarax, Graham87, Quale, Bubba73, Ueucha, Jmw0000, WTHarvey, Krakatoa, Cobblet, Fetofs, B00P, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Justin Stafford, Galactor213, JoeBot, Storeye, ScottM84, Rugops, Maurice Carbonaro, Anonywiki, Moondoll, Billebrooks, VolkovBot, Malinaccier, Soler97, Goliadkin, Swedish fusilier, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, MystBot, Addbot, LaaknorBot, Lightbot, Ben Ben, Luckas-bot, Gongshow, AnomieBOT, Ulric1313, LilHelpa, MrsHudson, Adrignola, DespicableLiar, Iceman9gem, H3llBot, Orange Suede Sofa, Ihardlythinkso, Movses-bot, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Toccata quarta, ChrisGualtieri, Monkbot, Canyafeeltheluv and Anonymous: 64
- **Sicilian Defence, Accelerated Dragon** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence%2C\\_Accelerated\\_Dragon?oldid=687574533](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence%2C_Accelerated_Dragon?oldid=687574533) *Contributors:* Rl, Bubba73, Cobblet, Shalom Yechiel, SyG, Casopi, Anonywiki, Sbowers3, Goliadkin, Sun Creator, Addbot, Rpattabi, Yobot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, HRoestBot, Ihardlythinkso, Rumo75, Frietjes, Toccata quarta, BattyBot, Vnkn, Monkbot and Anonymous: 11
- **Sicilian, Dragon, Yugoslav attack, 9.Bc4** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence%2C\\_Dragon\\_Variation%2C\\_Yugoslav\\_Attack%2C\\_9.Bc4?oldid=677289812](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence%2C_Dragon_Variation%2C_Yugoslav_Attack%2C_9.Bc4?oldid=677289812) *Contributors:* Webhat, ComplexZeta, Chvsanchez, Carcharoth, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, Siddharth Prabhu, Gaius Cornelius, Hydrogen Iodide, Shalom Yechiel, Storeye, Rugops, Moondoll, FrankEldonDixon, Voorlandt, Matthew Yeager, Soler97, Sbowers3, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Kelsoisme, Kman543210, Yobot, AnomieBOT, LilHelpa, MrsHudson, Siddhartha Ghai, Fryedk, Cobaltcigs, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Laicyrus, Toccata quarta, Bla2e, Infraboof, Monkbot and Anonymous: 12
- **Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence%2C\\_Najdorf\\_Variation?oldid=707358207](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence%2C_Najdorf_Variation?oldid=707358207) *Contributors:* William Avery, Robbot, Webhat, Asparagus, Bfinn, Explendido Rocha, Neile, Modargo, ZeroOne, Goatbear, Edoderoo, Cygnus-Pius, Jacobolus, Jeff3000, Tabletop, AllanBz, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, WarmasterKron, Nylex, Bgwhite, Billbrock, Krakatoa, Cobblet, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Whispering, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, OneEuropeanHeart, KNM, Safalra, Storeye, Thijs!bot,

Zickzack, Escarbot, Raghunc, JAnDbot, Michig, Nmcmurdo, Talaris, SyG, Anonywiki, Furorimpus, Trimagna, MaxBrowne, Rodrigo170988, M4gnum0n, Sun Creator, SilvononBot, Mm40, Addbot, SpellingBot, Johannesbjarki, LaaknorBot, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Conroy23, Rojypala, Whiteknight, Ben Ben, Gebminds, AnomieBOT, MrsHudson, Latest Incarnation, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Apendcy, Johnnyc24, Thomasdav, H3llBot, Savedra, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Jogmiers, Green Rain, Twaburov~enwiki, BG19bot, Compfreak7, Toccata quarta, Hasire, DoctorKubla, I am One of Many, RynMasters, Monkbot, Jamalmunshi, Aussie589, Tsubakura and Anonymous: 61

- **Sicilian Defence, Scheveningen Variation** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence%2C\\_Scheveningen\\_Variation?oldid=661323658](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence%2C_Scheveningen_Variation?oldid=661323658) *Contributors:* Webhat, Andycjp, Bob.v.R, Andreas Kaufmann, Longhair, Sjakkalle, Backward Development, Otto ter Haar, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Fetofs, Shalom Yechiel, OrphanBot, CmdrObot, R'n'B, Lyctc, VolkovBot, TXiKiBoT, Sun Creator, SilvononBot, Addbot, LaaknorBot, Dr Zimbu, Luckas-bot, Yobot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, FrescoBot, Phoenixthebird, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, TitaniumCarbide, Acrazydiamond, Frietjes, Green Rain, YFdyh-bot, TuxLibNit and Anonymous: 19
- **Chekhov Sicilian** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence%2C\\_Chekhov\\_Variation?oldid=702574743](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence%2C_Chekhov_Variation?oldid=702574743) *Contributors:* Zundark, Gromlakh, MBisanz, Gary, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, CosmicPenguin, DGG, R'n'B, TXiKiBoT, Undoubtedly0, Sun Creator, Rror, SilvononBot, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Yobot, Thehistorychannel, LilHelpa, MrsHudson, BukMer, HRoestBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 4
- **Wing Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wing\\_Gambit?oldid=678370655](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wing_Gambit?oldid=678370655) *Contributors:* Camembert, Sonjaaa, Rich Farmbrough, ZeroOne, Camitommy, Jacobulus, Quale, Bubba73, Cobblet, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Nick Number, S43, Magioladitis, R'n'B, VolkovBot, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Ronald Reuel, Yobot, JackieBot, ArthurBot, MrsHudson, Fryedk, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Ukasm and Anonymous: 17
- **Smith-Morra Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian\\_Defence%2C\\_Smith%E2%80%93Morra\\_Gambit?oldid=670123329](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicilian_Defence%2C_Smith%E2%80%93Morra_Gambit?oldid=670123329) *Contributors:* Camembert, Cimon Avaro, Evercat, SuPERLman, Asparagus, No Guru, Andris, Mdob, Danko Georgiev, Modargo, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Chvsanchez, Ynhockey, Brian Merz, Jacobulus, Feny~enwiki, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, WarmasterKron, Cobblet, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Shir Khan, Random name, Storeye, WinBot, Anonywiki, Manuel0302, Cbigorgne, TXiKiBoT, StAnselm, PixelBot, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Against the current, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, AnomieBOT, Shotcallerballeballer, MrsHudson, PeskyGnat, BukMer, EmausBot, H3llBot, Mlang.Finn, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, BZTMPS, Toccata quarta, Jhimmane, A86EH and Anonymous: 32
- **Bishop's Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop%27s\\_Opening?oldid=640969329](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop%27s_Opening?oldid=640969329) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Jao, No Guru, Galaxy07, Sonjaaa, Zfr, ThreeE, ZeroOne, Shanes, Yurik, Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Sam Sloan, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, RiseRover, Rigadoun, Tws45, JAnDbot, The Transhumanist, Pawnkingthree, Idioma-bot, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, OTAVIO1981, JL-Bot, Bob1960evens, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Luckas-bot, AnomieBOT, Unara, Citation bot, Spaderis, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, HRoestBot, RedBot, Double sharp, Ripchip Bot, Ihardlythinkso, Neutrophil, Green Rain, Jkmaskell, Toccata quarta, FoCuSandLeArN, Facultative, GretDrabba and Anonymous: 20
- **Portuguese Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portuguese\\_Opening?oldid=641784077](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portuguese_Opening?oldid=641784077) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Lostkiwi, ZeroOne, Quale, Bubba73, That Guy, From That Show!, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Ri st, Anonywiki, STBotD, Idioma-bot, Goliadkin, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Yobot, Kelisa English, Citation bot, Spaderis, Xqbot, Adrignola, BukMer, CABAR, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 3
- **King's Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s\\_Gambit?oldid=707357696](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s_Gambit?oldid=707357696) *Contributors:* AxelBoldt, Furrykef, Grendelkhan, Thue, Asparagus, Giftlite, Djinn112, No Guru, Andycjp, Sonjaaa, Danko Georgiev, Bob.v.R, Klin~enwiki, ThreeE, ZeroOne, El C, Gene Nygaard, LukeSurl, WilliamKF, CygnusPius, Jacobulus, GregorB, Male1979, Audiovideo, Sjakkalle, Koavf, Quale, Bubba73, Matt Deres, YurikBot, RussBot, Van der Hoorn, Frederick R, Krakatoa, Cinik, Mike Dillon, Cobblet, SmackBot, McGeddon, The Gnome, Chris the speller, TimBentley, Whispering, Srue, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, JudahH, Rodrigo Novaes, Banedon, Grj23, Gagueci, Thijs!bot, Mibelz, Zickzack, Useazebra, Mack2, Tws45, HolyT, Michig, Rothorpe, Albmont, Baccyak4H, J mareswaran, Pawnkingthree, FrankEldonDixon, Use the force, Idioma-bot, VolkovBot, TXiKiBoT, MaxBrowne, Scottywong, SieBot, Rodrigo170988, Jojalozzo, Vanadamme, ClueBot, Wysprgr2005, Dejvas, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Mlaffs, Rossen4, Chesslover96, ChessA4, Addbot, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Zorrobot, Yobot, AnomieBOT, Materialscientist, LilHelpa, Xqbot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, SassoBot, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, Khb33, Mydimle, Frogsterking, Double sharp, TobeBot, Jthemphill, TjBot, Grondilu, Other Choices, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Wukai, Frietjes, Green Rain, SverreJ0, Rayous, Toccata quarta, Boeing720, MyTuppence, GretDrabba, Monkbot, Muhammad Areez and Anonymous: 106
- **Fischer Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s\\_Gambit%2C\\_Fischer\\_Defense?oldid=641781379](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s_Gambit%2C_Fischer_Defense?oldid=641781379) *Contributors:* Greenman, Danko Georgiev, CanisRufus, Quale, Bubba73, Quuxplusone, Krakatoa, Lumaga, TimBentley, Shalom Yechiel, RomanSpa, Rodrigo Novaes, Microbe20504, Stuzart, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Legobot II, MrsHudson, Ehird, Adrignola, BukMer, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, NickWoolner and Anonymous: 18
- **Falkbeer Countergambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s\\_Gambit%2C\\_Falkbeer\\_Countergambit?oldid=694588662](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s_Gambit%2C_Falkbeer_Countergambit?oldid=694588662) *Contributors:* Recury, Quale, Bubba73, FlaBot, Krakatoa, Myasuda, Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, Voorlandt, SieBot, Blahblah5555, Mild Bill Hiccup, Sun Creator, ChessA4, Addbot, Dawynn, SpBot, Yobot, Ulric1313, MrsHudson, Bruce Edward Williams, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Dinamik-bot, Jesse V., KosmoKnot, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, KLBot2, Boeing720 and Anonymous: 7
- **Rice Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s\\_Gambit%2C\\_Rice\\_Gambit?oldid=699459785](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%27s_Gambit%2C_Rice_Gambit?oldid=699459785) *Contributors:* Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Brittle heaven, SieBot, Euryalus, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, MrOllie, Yobot, AnomieBOT, Ulric1313, MrsHudson, BukMer, D'ohBot, Aschwole, Billwall2, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 5
- **Center Game** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Center\\_Game?oldid=641772272](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Center_Game?oldid=641772272) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Cyde, Robbot, Binand, Discospinster, ZeroOne, Quale, Bubba73, Metropolitan90, Msikma, Alpatango~enwiki, Tsetattr, Cobblet, SmackBot, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Banedon, Thijs!bot, Escarbot, .anacondabot, LordAnubisBOT, Idioma-bot, TXiKiBoT, SieBot, Goliadkin, Sun Creator, Addbot, Rapanui73, Tassedethe, Kiril Simeonovski, Luckas-bot, Yobot, ArthurBot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, FrescoBot, RedBot, Double sharp, Alzar-ian16, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain and Anonymous: 12

- **Danish Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danish\\_Gambit?oldid=682705385](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danish_Gambit?oldid=682705385) *Contributors:* AxelBoldt, Arvindn, GCarty, Byrial, ZeroOne, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Cobblet, JoanneB, FrozenPurpleCube, McGeddon, Fetofs, Colonies Chris, TscaBot, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, Theghaz, Alan.ca, Thijs!bot, Mibelz, Hwiechers, Tws45, LordAnubisBOT, Oliver-hh, Idioma-bot, VolkovBot, ThomasSFL, Mehmet Karatay, Molineux, OTAVIO1981, Artichoker, M4gnum0n, Sun Creator, Balokrop-enwiki, Addbot, Tsauce32-enwiki, Newfraferz87, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Ptbogourou, Ulric1313, Citation bot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, Khb33, RedBot, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Vinícius Machado Vogt, KJBIBLE1611 and Anonymous: 27
- **Lopez Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lopez\\_Opening?oldid=641781578](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lopez_Opening?oldid=641781578) *Contributors:* ThreeE, ZeroOne, Mairi, Quale, Bubba73, Titoxd, Frigoris, SmackBot, YellowMonkey, TimBentley, Shalom Yechiel, Cream147, Useight, Idioma-bot, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Coolguy123456789, Yobot, Againme, Citation bot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Pete Hobbs, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 8
- **Napoleon Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon\\_Opening?oldid=683834401](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_Opening?oldid=683834401) *Contributors:* Rl, ZeroOne, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Frederick R, Shalom Yechiel, Hvn0413, Escarbot, Pawnkingthree, Idioma-bot, Karophyr, AlleborgoBot, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, AndersBot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, MrsHudson, Locobot, Adrignola, BukMer, EmausBot, Pete Hobbs, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, MyTuppence and Anonymous: 7
- **Parham Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danvers\\_Opening?oldid=704792755](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danvers_Opening?oldid=704792755) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Mike Rosoft, ThreeE, ZeroOne, Causa sui, Troels Nybo-enwiki, Eleland, Quale, Bubba73, Eiad77, Gurch, Frederick R, Krakatoa, Zwobot, Crisco 1492, Cobblet, SmackBot, KnowledgeOfSelf, Shalom Yechiel, Ioannes Pragensis, Zappernapper, Xeno, LittleOldMe old, Anonywiki, VolkovBot, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, Smallbox, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, El bot de la dieta, Aitias, Maztaim, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Xp54321, Jasper Deng, Mischeifmaker, Katten2008, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Squeaker44, Ptbogourou, AnomieBOT, MrsHudson, Almbot, Adrignola, BukMer, Chess analyzer, Electricmaster, Grondilu, Ne0romantic, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Anentiresleeve, BG19bot, Rayous, ChessPlayerLev, Cyberbot II, Fegelman1977, Lugia2453, OGBranniff, DavidLeighEllis, Babythegreat, Fishface gurl, Monkbob, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 33
- **Vienna Game** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vienna\\_Game?oldid=694127942](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vienna_Game?oldid=694127942) *Contributors:* Camembert, Ixfd64, Phil Boswell, Math-Martin, Neilc, ThreeE, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, CygnusPius, Jacobolus, Quale, Bubba73, FlaBot, YurikBot, Spike Wilbury, Krakatoa, Ospalh, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Dweller, Eskimbot, Bluebot, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, CosmoSearcher, Eastfrisian, Banedon, Thijs!bot, DaQuirin, Nick Number, Escarbot, Armkang, Baccyak4H, Bot-Schaffer, Anonywiki, MaxBrowne, OTAVIO1981, JL-Bot, Swedish fusilier, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Addbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Zorrobot, Luckas-bot, Mann jess, Citation bot, MrsHudson, 550Brock, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Double sharp, TobeBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, RainerZufall, MyTuppence, Makecatbot, Francois-Pier and Anonymous: 24
- **Frankenstein-Dracula Variation** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vienna\\_Game%2C\\_Frankenstein-Dracula\\_Variation?oldid=702402819](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vienna_Game%2C_Frankenstein-Dracula_Variation?oldid=702402819) *Contributors:* Camembert, Sannse, Evercat, Dale Arnett, Hadal, Cyrius, Estel-enwiki, Aequo, Bumml3, Vague Rant, ZeroOne, Albinomoney, Themindset, Richard Arthur Norton (1958- ), CygnusPius, Totalnewbie, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Brittle heaven, Shalom Yechiel, Lambiam, Otto4711, Dvandersluis, Anonywiki, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Addbot, Lightbot, Greg Holden 08, AnomieBOT, Kelisa English, Mann jess, MrsHudson, Double sharp, CarlesMartin, Mentac, Gengis Gat, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Enono46, Toccata quarta and Anonymous: 22
- **Alapin's Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alapin%7B%7D\\_Opening?oldid=707358705](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alapin%7B%7D_Opening?oldid=707358705) *Contributors:* ZeroOne, Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Cobblet, Bryan Nguyen, Bluebot, Shalom Yechiel, Localzuk, ThePacker, Myasuda, Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, HolyT, The Transhumanist, Michig, TXiKiBoT, Voorlandt, Goliadkin, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Zagothal, Citation bot, Adrignola, BukMer, LegesRomanorum, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 14
- **French Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French\\_Defence?oldid=713154397](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Defence?oldid=713154397) *Contributors:* Zundark, Arvindn, Camembert, Pizza Puzzle, Robbot, RedWolf, Cornellier, Aidfarh, EvanED, No Guru, Gamaliel, Zaphod Beeblebrox, Andris, Matt Crypto, Neilc, Chowbok, Andy-cjp, PhDP, ThreeE, Byrial, Dmr2, ZeroOne, Chi Sigma, CanisRufus, Gilgamesh he, Causa sui, Shenme, Viriditas, La goutte de pluie, Grahbudd, Knucmo2, WhiteC, Adrian.benko, CygnusPius, Jacobolus, GregorB, Sjakkalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, FlaBot, Dje123, WarmasterKron, Nylex, YurikBot, Gavinwilson, Introgressive, Krakatoa, Calaschysm, Cobblet, KnightRider-enwiki, Thegn, TimBentley, Silly rabbit, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Ioscus, Courcelles, Telrod, Cryptic C62, Wfaxon, Thijs!bot, Chipka, Xolom, SmokeyTheCat, Mack2, JAnDbot, Magioladitis, AaronCBurke, Omerzu, Albmont, Anonywiki, Manuel0302, Pawnkingthree, Dinochess3, Idioma-bot, Black Kite, TXiKiBoT, Voorlandt, Anna Lincoln, MaxBrowne, Broadbot, Synthebot, Shirleyepaul, WereSpielChequers, Fricasso, Abhishikt, Anchor Link Bot, Loren.wilton, Kane-sue, ClueBot, Newzild, Swedish fusilier, Auntof6, Sun Creator, Baoball, Rossen4, Against the current, Matma Rex, Addbot, Ronhjones, LaaknorBot, Renatokeshet, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Mohsenkazempur, Yoavd, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Amirobot, Kwanzaa12, MaterialsScientist, ArthurBot, Spaideris, Lefthandsketch, MrsHudson, Gilo1969, BarryNL, Dirrival, PeskyGnat, IShadowed, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Pjódólf, RedBot, Orenburg1, Castor Affairé, Alzarian16, Bluekingj, EmausBot, Laszlovszky András, ZéroBot, Bendayan, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Checkrepublic, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Jb31415, Toccata quarta, Proxyma, BattyBot, He to Hecuba, Makecatbot, Francois-Pier, ASM999, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 117
- **Caro-Kann Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caro%2E%80%93Kann\\_Defence?oldid=713690481](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caro%2E%80%93Kann_Defence?oldid=713690481) *Contributors:* Zundark, Camembert, Ewen, Michael Hardy, Gabbe, Nikai, Robbot, No Guru, Neilc, Andycjp, MartinBiely, ThreeE, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Gilgamesh he, Fematrimpe, Causa sui, CygnusPius, Gestrin, Feny-a-enwiki, Zoz, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Tommy Kronkvist, FlaBot, YurikBot, Red Slash, Bergsten, Msikma, Ejdzzej, Krakatoa, Cinik, Nikkimaria, Cobblet, M'vy, Bluewave, SmackBot, J carrillo vii, KocjoBot-enwiki, TimBentley, Silly rabbit, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Mitrius, MCWNT, Atkinson 291, Jeupham, Duduong, Rogerborg, ShelfSkewed, Thijs!bot, Chipka, RaNdOm26, Tws45, JAnDbot, Michig, SyG, Baccyak4H, STBot, Maurice Carbonaro, Anonywiki, Lytc, Philip Trueman, TXiKiBoT, Rei-bot, Tobiasverhulst, MaxBrowne, Zain Ebrahim111, SieBot, DarknessEnthroned, Abhishikt, LetsReason, Ghostface2292, Sun Creator, Dontmentionit, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Gmeiner, Addbot, Colibri37, Ronhjones, LaaknorBot, FiriBot, Jellevc, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Snowinmelbourne, Neptune5000, MaterialsScientist, LilHelpa, Xqbot, Kleiner, MrsHudson, Pmlineditor, PeskyGnat, RibotBOT, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Citation bot 1, HRoestBot, RedBot, MastiBot, Trappist the monk, Rbidegain, TjBot, Parkywiki, ZéroBot, Ebrambot, Maxim11maxim, Scientific29, Ihardlythinkso, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Jkmaskell, Toccata quarta, Proxyma, Royalblue64, JHarryP, Francois-Pier, Monkbob, Puzzlesbrony777, Faranan2030 and Anonymous: 74

- **Pirc Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pirc\\_Defence?oldid=707358076](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pirc_Defence?oldid=707358076) *Contributors:* Camembert, JakeVortex, Meelar, Djinn112, No Guru, Neilc, Karl-Henner, Sam Hocevar, ZeroOne, Jannex, Jacobolus, GregorB, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Falphin, WTHarvey, Nicholasink, YurikBot, Frederick R, Introgressive, Krakatoa, Georgeslegoupier, Cobblet, KnightRider~enwiki, SmackBot, Unyoyega, Colonel Tom, Wkargel, Whispering, Shalom Yechiel, Mitrius, Cryptic C62, Thijs!bot, JAnDbot, Narssarssuaq, Michig, SyG, Albmont, Baccyak4H, SwiftBot, Lenin333, Dinohess3, FrankEldonDixon, VolkovBot, MaxBrowne, JhsBot, Jose Fernandez-Calvo, Roadcreature, SieBot, Swedish fusilier, Sun Creator, J.Gowers, Rossen4, DumZiBoT, Addbot, Rjsolcruz, LaaknorBot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Ptbotgourou, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, PeskyGnat, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Citation bot 1, RedBot, TjBot, Bounce1337, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Slimepot636, Frietjes, Delusion23, Green Rain, Actuariesquire, Archrith, Toccata quarta, Makecat-bot, Wywin, Archvenison, Shreyas61196, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 38
- **Pirc Defence, Austrian Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pirc\\_Defence%2C\\_Austrian\\_Attack?oldid=641262015](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pirc_Defence%2C_Austrian_Attack?oldid=641262015) *Contributors:* Sasata, Cryptic C62, Mack2, Piledhigheranddeeper, Sun Creator, J.Gowers, Luckas-bot, Yobot, PeskyGnat, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, Slimepot636, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot and Anonymous: 1
- **Balogh Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balogh\\_Defense?oldid=641771935](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balogh_Defense?oldid=641771935) *Contributors:* H Padleckas, ZeroOne, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Felix3~enwiki, TimBentley, Shalom Yechiel, The Transhumanist, Voorlandt, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Spaderis, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 2
- **Scandinavian Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scandinavian\\_Defense?oldid=706401934](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scandinavian_Defense?oldid=706401934) *Contributors:* Camembert, Gentgeen, Isopropyl, No Guru, Adam McMaster, Neilc, Andycjp, Sonjaaa, ThreeE, Rich Farmbrough, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Wareh, Eleland, Ronark, Jacobolus, Sjakkalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, FlaBot, DVdm, Miconian, YurikBot, Introgressive, Krakatoa, Jemtpymethod, Cobblet, Eskimbot, Silly rabbit, Colonies Chris, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Dnheff, Rodrigo Novaes, CapitalR, Tawkerbot2, Jlowery, Rnickel, Thijs!bot, Tgok, Nick Number, Goldenband, Tws45, JAnDbot, SyG, Baccyak4H, No-genius, Pawnkingthree, FrankEldonDixon, Mrabinowitz, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, SieBot, Belthor, Newzild, Betaben, Lartoven, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Addbot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Greg Holden 08, Rubinbot, Ulric1313, Citation bot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Citation bot 1, HRoestBot, CarlesMartin, WikitanvirBot, Grondilu, ZéroBot, Status, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Green Rain, Vinicius Machado Vogt, Editorinator, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Proxyma, MyTuppence, KJB1BLE1611 and Anonymous: 54
- **Nimzowitsch Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimzowitsch\\_Defence?oldid=698276248](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimzowitsch_Defence?oldid=698276248) *Contributors:* Robbot, Neilc, Sonjaaa, ZeroOne, Feny~enwiki, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Nihiltres, RussBot, Frederick R, Krakatoa, BOT-Superzerocool, Shalom Yechiel, Gustave G., Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, WinBot, JAnDbot, Baccyak4H, Rei-bot, MaxBrowne, Sun Creator, XLinkBot, Lab-oratory, Addbot, LaaknorBot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, JackieBot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Einheitlix, Adrignola, BukMer, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Barnabas1717, Chessmasterguy, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 19
- **Alekhine's Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alekhine%27s\\_Defence?oldid=707358339](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alekhine%27s_Defence?oldid=707358339) *Contributors:* Zundark, Camembert, Furrykef, No Guru, Neilc, Sonjaaa, Mschlindwein, ThreeE, Bender235, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Gilgamesh he, Fermatprime, Amontero, La goutte de pluie, Lectorar, CygnusPius, Jacobolus, Tmassey, Feny~enwiki, Josh Parris, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, YurikBot, Hede2000, Frederick R, Krakatoa, Tonywalton, Wknight94, Cobblet, Kgf0, Eskimbot, Colonel Tom, Chris the speller, TimBentley, Caissa's DeathAngel, Brittle heaven, Verrai, Drkirkby, Shalom Yechiel, Courcelles, WeggeBot, Thijs!bot, JAnDbot, The Transhumanist, Michig, Dmvalio, TXiKiBoT, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, Msavere, Serprex, SieBot, BotMultichill, Underdoggum, Swedish fusilier, M4gnum0n, PixelBot, Sun Creator, SchreiberBike, Rossen4, DumZiBoT, Chesslover96, Power2084, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Download, CarsracBot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, AnomieBOT, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Trizob, GrouchoBot, RibotBOT, WebCiteBOT, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Double sharp, Ripchip Bot, EmausBot, John of Reading, ZéroBot, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, Wukai, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Laanders, Legolover26, Toccata quarta, Khazar2, Twyndylyng and Anonymous: 53
- **Modern Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern\\_Defense?oldid=702029616](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_Defense?oldid=702029616) *Contributors:* Djinn112, No Guru, Neilc, ZeroOne, Chi Sigma, Velho, Jacobolus, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Falphin, WTHarvey, Nicholasink, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Georgeslegoupier, Cobblet, Melchoir, Brittle heaven, Shalom Yechiel, Thijs!bot, Nick Number, SwiftBot, Idioma-bot, VolkovBot, Rossen3, GBizzle, Flyer22 Reborn, WilhelmHH~enwiki, Swedish fusilier, PixelBot, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Ronhjones, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, ChristopheS, ArthurBot, Spaderis, MrsHudson, Adrignola, FrescoBot, TjBot, ZéroBot, ChuispastonBot, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Smcker, Mscoobs, SeanG007, Willneibergall and Anonymous: 22
- **Monkey's Bum** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern\\_Defense%2C\\_Monkey%27s\\_Bum?oldid=641422248](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_Defense%2C_Monkey%27s_Bum?oldid=641422248) *Contributors:* ZeroOne, Bubba73, Georgeslegoupier, Skittle, Dsreyn, Melchoir, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Tawkerbot2, Myasuda, WinBot, J.delanoy, Anonywiki, GBizzle, Rhododendrites, DOI bot, Lightbot, Yobot, MrsHudson, FrescoBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, KWiki, Monkbob and Anonymous: 7
- **Owen's Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Owen%27s\\_Defence?oldid=707359022](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Owen%27s_Defence?oldid=707359022) *Contributors:* ZeroOne, Bobo192, Alansohn, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Miastko, Krakatoa, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Fvasconcellos, Thijs!bot, Michig, Xeno, Acroterion, Rjbox, Anonywiki, Pawnkingthree, Voorlandt, Quantpole, Roadcreature, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Addbot, Ronhjones, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Newportm, AnomieBOT, Citation bot, ArthurBot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Louperibot, Alexander.kure, Double sharp, Updatehelper, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Haegint, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Toccata quarta, Pcorod11, Edgemen, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 22
- **St. George Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_George\\_Defence?oldid=698402850](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._George_Defence?oldid=698402850) *Contributors:* Andycjp, AxSkov, ZeroOne, RoyBoy, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Falphin, Canththinkofagoodname, Celestianpower, YurikBot, Frederick R, Introgressive, Krakatoa, Cobblet, SmackBot, Hydrogen Iodide, Hmains, Shalom Yechiel, Thijs!bot, Mentifisto, SmokeyTheCat, SyG, Chromancer, AlleborgoBot, Soler97, AMackenzie, Drmies, Fivesided, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Steak, Mro, Luckas-bot, Turbine27, Ulric1313, Gsmgm, Adrignola, Full-date unlinking bot, Alzarian16, Ihardlythinkso, Whoop whoop pull up, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 13
- **Queen's Pawn Game** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen%27s\\_Pawn\\_Game?oldid=706757192](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen%27s_Pawn_Game?oldid=706757192) *Contributors:* No Guru, Andycjp, Bob.v.R, Karol Langner, ThreeE, ZeroOne, Sjakkalle, Koavf, Quale, S Chapin, Bubba73, Cobblet, TimBentley, Whispering, Shalom Yechiel, Amarande, Rigadoun, Thijs!bot, Matthew Proctor, Escarbot, SyG, Black Kite, TXiKiBoT, Rei-bot, AlleborgoBot, SieBot, Joe Gatt, Sophia91, Ellassint, Swedish fusilier, Niceguyede, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Mm40, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, ArthurBot, Xqbot, Adrignola,

HRoestBot, Mentac, Alzarian16, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Maxim11maxim, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Primergrey, Toccata quarta, MyTuppence, ASM999 and Anonymous: 25

- **Closed Game** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Closed\\_Game?oldid=640968300](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Closed_Game?oldid=640968300) *Contributors:* Isnow, Quale, Bubba73, Cydebot, Thijs!bot, DaQuirin, Hmrox, Idioma-bot, SieBot, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Addbot, Yobot, Ptbotgourou, Adrignola, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Shreyas61196 and Anonymous: 7
- **Semi-Closed Game** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semi-Closed\\_Game?oldid=640966789](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semi-Closed_Game?oldid=640966789) *Contributors:* Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Colonies Chris, Cydebot, Thijs!bot, Idioma-bot, SE7, Sun Creator, Addbot, Lucas-bot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 4
- **Queen's Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen's\\_Gambit?oldid=704846287](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen's_Gambit?oldid=704846287) *Contributors:* Zundark, Camembert, Marteau, Furrykef, Ed g2s, Lowellian, Jarashi, Dbenbenn, DocWatson42, Djinn112, No Guru, Neilc, Zeimusu, Sonjaaa, H Padleckas, Felix Wan, ZeroOne, Gilgamesh he, Adrian.benko, Jacobolus, Hbdragon88, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Srleffler, Roboto de Ajvol, YurikBot, Frederick R, Krakatoa, Cobblet, SmackBot, Colonies Chris, Tsca.bot, Shalom Yechiel, Matchups, Ravenous75, Kingscrusher, Eastfrisian, WilliamJE, Chantessy, Fugli, JamesAM, Thijs!bot, Emeraldcityserendipity, Storkk, SyG, Albmont, Gundato, DWAnderson, Idioma-bot, Lights, VolkovBot, TXiKiBoT, Steven J. Anderson, MaxBrowne, Zain Ebrahim111, YonaBot, Cwkmall, Abhishikt, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Addbot, Laaknor-Bot, Kiril Simeonovski, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Ptbotgourou, ArthurBot, Spaidaris, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, MastiBot, EmausBot, ZéroBot, ChuispastonBot, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Movses-bot, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, The Gaon, Monkbot, SaxXiz, RiotGrrr186, HaveFunAllDay100 and Anonymous: 38
- **Queen's Gambit Accepted** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen's\\_Gambit\\_Accepted?oldid=709354186](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen's_Gambit_Accepted?oldid=709354186) *Contributors:* Michael Hardy, Robbot, Jarashi, No Guru, Gdr, Iansk, B.d.mills, ZeroOne, Shanes, Evil Monkey, BlankVerse, Sjakkalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Richardcavell, Cobblet, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Chris the speller, Silly rabbit, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, SubSeven, WilliamJE, Thijs!bot, Mack2, SyG, Twxs, J.delanoy, AlleborgoBot, Badvibes101, SieBot, Showers3, Randy Kryn, SpikeToronto, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Mortense, HerculeBot, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Shotcallerballerballer, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, Citation bot 1, EmausBot, WikitanvirBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Primergrey, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Toccata quarta, Asd36f, Viridians, Monkbot, Surface wall and Anonymous: 37
- **Queen's Gambit Declined** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen's\\_Gambit\\_Declined?oldid=710449885](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen's_Gambit_Declined?oldid=710449885) *Contributors:* Zundark, Greenman, La Minturnesa, Giftlite, No Guru, Ukexpat, Thorwald, ZeroOne, Robnock, Brian Merz, Kbdank71, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Cobblet, Jasón, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Silly rabbit, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Jlowery, Teagtera, Magiola-ditis, SyG, Rugops, Anonywiki, Idioma-bot, Rossen3, SieBot, Sophia91, Sasha Krotov, Farannan, Sun Creator, T71024, Rossen4, Gollenaiven, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Eltrig, Aldibibable, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Shotcallerballerballer, Citation bot, Spaidaris, MrsHudson, SassoBot, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, BigDwiki, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Gburger1296, H3llBot, ChuispastonBot, Ihardlythinkso, Snotbot, Frietjes, Theopolisme, BG19bot, Toccata quarta, BattyBot, MyTuppence, Earl0016, Monkbot, Yeh000 and Anonymous: 38
- **Cambridge Springs Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen's\\_Gambit\\_Declined%2C\\_Cambridge\\_Springs\\_Defense?oldid=641784139](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen's_Gambit_Declined%2C_Cambridge_Springs_Defense?oldid=641784139) *Contributors:* DrZukhar, Quale, Bubba73, Cjpuffin, Shalom Yechiel, Rigadoun, OTAVIO1981, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Yobot, MrsHudson, BukMer, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Monkbot and Anonymous: 7
- **Tarrasch Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarrasch\\_Defense?oldid=709797030](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarrasch_Defense?oldid=709797030) *Contributors:* No Guru, ZeroOne, Woohookitty, Sjakkalle, Rjwilmsi, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Felix3-enwiki, Zwobot, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, RobotJcb, Shalom Yechiel, Thijs!bot, MartinBot, Anonywiki, Idioma-bot, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Matěj Grabovský, Lucas-bot, Yobot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Preobrazhenskiy, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Wikinetman, Citation bot 1, ZéroBot, Nightsideoflife, ChuispastonBot, Ihardlythinkso, Mjbmrbot, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Green Rain, BG19bot, Toccata quarta, Francois-Pier and Anonymous: 12
- **Marshall Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall\\_Defense?oldid=702639851](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Defense?oldid=702639851) *Contributors:* Camembert, ZeroOne, Brian Merz, Sjakkalle, Koavf, Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Rigadoun, Red 81, Rossen3, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Aldibibable, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Ulric1313, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, RedBot, RjwilmsiBot, EmausBot, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, Solemnechidna, Frietjes, Green Rain, BG19bot, Makecat-bot, Jltmtz, SaxXiz and Anonymous: 11
- **Baltic Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baltic\\_Defense?oldid=673086088](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baltic_Defense?oldid=673086088) *Contributors:* Arvindn, ZeroOne, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, SmackBot, Chris the speller, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, MTSbot-enwiki, Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, The Transhumanist, STBotD, Black Kite, Rei-bot, Voorlandt, Joe Gatt, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, MystBot, Addbot, Fyrael, Lucas-bot, Yobot, JackieBot, ArthurBot, Spaidaris, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, FrescoBot, Citation bot 1, RedBot, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, RynMasters and Anonymous: 10
- **Slav Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slav\\_Defense?oldid=681737246](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slav_Defense?oldid=681737246) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Jao, No Guru, Ato, Bob.v.R, ZeroOne, Causa sui, Foobaz, Anthony Appleyard, Jacobolus, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Cobblet, That Guy, From That Show!, SmackBot, Nickst, Silly rabbit, Brittle heaven, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, RTejedor, Przemek Jahr, Escarbot, SyG, Albmont, Baccyak4H, Hmshiau, Idioma-bot, Cbigorgne, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, Mohsenkazempur, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Ulric1313, Citation bot, ArthurBot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Bzmarko, JaysonSunshine, ZéroBot, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Toccata quarta, Hasire, Epicgenius, ASM999 and Anonymous: 32
- **Semi-Slav Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semi-Slav\\_Defense?oldid=691819671](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semi-Slav_Defense?oldid=691819671) *Contributors:* Bkell, No Guru, Galaxy07, Neilc, Dmr2, ZeroOne, Chvsanchez, Velho, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Nicholasink, Krakatoa, Shalom Yechiel, Rubisco-enwiki, Geneofinterest, SyG, Baccyak4H, Theroadislong, MaxBrowne, Derekslater, Rodrigo170988, Kotniski, Pakaraki, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Willking1979, Jluoke, Lucas-bot, Yobot, Materialscientist, LilHelpa, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Columbiarvrgorge, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, FrescoBot, HRoestBot, WikitanvirBot, Zerkroz, ZéroBot, Aschwole, Mentibot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Legolover26, Toccata quarta, GeneralizationsAreBad and Anonymous: 29
- **Symmetrical Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symmetrical\\_Defense?oldid=641787725](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symmetrical_Defense?oldid=641787725) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Matthead, ZeroOne, Jacobolus, Quale, Bubba73, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, TAMilo, Baccyak4H, Lilac Soul, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Aldibibable, Lucas-bot, Citation bot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, RedBot, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, BattyBot, Makecat-bot and Anonymous: 9

- **Chigorin Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chigorin\\_Defense?oldid=671148991](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chigorin_Defense?oldid=671148991) *Contributors:* Zundark, Evercat, ZeroOne, Quale, YurikBot, Holzi, Cobblet, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, Idioma-bot, TXiKiBoT, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, MystBot, Addbot, Rapanui73, SpBot, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Citation bot, ArthurBot, Spaidieris, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, HRoestBot, RedBot, JamesMazur22, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Jkmaskell, Toccata quarta, Makecat-bot and Anonymous: 14
- **Albin Countergambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albin\\_Countergambit?oldid=648198800](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albin_Countergambit?oldid=648198800) *Contributors:* Eyrian, ZeroOne, Guaca, Keenan Pepper, Hbdragon88, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, Krakatoa, Ihendley, SmackBot, Gyrobo, Shalom Yechiel, Localzuk, Thijs!bot, YukiCuss, The Transhumanist, Idioma-bot, Voorlandt, OTAVIO1981, Sasha Krotov, Artichoker, PixelBot, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, Download, LaaknorBot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Unara, Citation bot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, SassoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Citation bot 1, RedBot, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, JasjotSingh Malhotra and Anonymous: 18
- **Indian Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian\\_Defence?oldid=694896309](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Defence?oldid=694896309) *Contributors:* Atlan, Mukerjee, ZeroOne, Nabla, Art LaPella, Foobaz, Isnow, Quale, Bubba73, Wisedog, Quuxplusone, DVdm, Jimp, Krakatoa, Richardcavell, Cobblet, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Thijs!bot, Mibelz, Giotto, JAnDbot, Roman à clef, SyG, Fconaway, Philcha, Pawnkingthree, DorganBot, Idioma-bot, TXiKiBoT, Voorlandt, Abhishikt, Swedish fusilier, Auntof6, Alexbot, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, DOI bot, LaaknorBot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Luckas-bot, Yobot, 9258fahsflkh917fas, Citation bot, Spaidieris, MrsHudson, Locobot, Einheitlix, Adrignola, BukMer, Kwikibible, Elockid, Pete Hobbs, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, DBigXray, Toccata quarta, BattyBot, MyTuppence and Anonymous: 22
- **Trompowsky Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trompowsky\\_Attack?oldid=642289017](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trompowsky_Attack?oldid=642289017) *Contributors:* AxelBoldt, JamesMLane, H Padleckas, ESkog, ZeroOne, Chvsanchez, Stemonitis, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Krakatoa, That Guy, From That Show!, Roberto Cruz, Shalom Yechiel, Fuhghettaboutit, Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, Liquid-aim-bot, Whatteaux, LordAnubisBOT, Undoubtedly0, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Kelisa English, Citation bot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, BukMer, Hushpuckena, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Chessbloke, Faranan2030, ASM999 and Anonymous: 17
- **King's Indian Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%7B%20Indian\\_Defence?oldid=709098338](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%7B%20Indian_Defence?oldid=709098338) *Contributors:* Webhat, Giftlite, Djinn112, No Guru, Neile, Sonjaaa, ZeroOne, Fermatprime, Kingsindian, Knucmo2, Meleos-enwiki, Jacobolus, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, YurikBot, Conscious, Krakatoa, Santaduck, Cobblet, Silly rabbit, Whispering, Brittle heaven, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Brainfood, Ford Prefect 2, Przemek Jahr, JackMcJiggins, Thijs!bot, David aukerman, Awilley, Michig, SyG, Albmont, Baccyak4H, FrankEldonDixon, Mostlygone, Tobiasverhulst, Glorfindel83, Yvonne the barber, Barbacot, Mightymax1, SieBot, Bryan Duggan, Derekslater, Matthew Yeager, DarknessEnthroned, Hxhbot, WilhelmHH-enwiki, PipepBot, Swedish fusilier, Crywalt, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Sixhobbits, Addbot, Lightbot, Mohsenkazempur, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Citation bot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Latest Incarnation, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, TjBot, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, Francois-Pier, GretDrabba, Monkbob, VishBK and Anonymous: 55
- **King's Indian Defence, Four Pawns Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%7B%20Indian\\_Defence%2C\\_Four\\_Pawns\\_Attack?oldid=711330743](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King%7B%20Indian_Defence%2C_Four_Pawns_Attack?oldid=711330743) *Contributors:* Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Cobblet, Shalom Yechiel, Slakr, Cream147, Michig, SyG, Perlnerd666, Bughunter2, Sun Creator, Chesskelvin, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Citation bot, MrsHudson, Hushpuckena, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, BG19bot, Monkbob and Anonymous: 16
- **East Indian Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East\\_Indian\\_Defence?oldid=641773886](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Indian_Defence?oldid=641773886) *Contributors:* Jao, Bubba73, Cobblet, SmackBot, Thijs!bot, SyG, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Adrignola, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, KWiki and Anonymous: 4
- **Grünfeld Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gr%C3%BCnfeld\\_Defence?oldid=690133315](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gr%C3%BCnfeld_Defence?oldid=690133315) *Contributors:* Camembert, Dwheeler, Robbot, Webhat, No Guru, Neile, Bob.v.R, Mukerjee, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Gene Nygaard, Jacobolus, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, OpenToppedBus, YurikBot, Wavelength, Yrithinnd, Welsh, Krakatoa, Cobblet, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Whispering, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Pfyde, Thijs!bot, Golf Bravo, Baccyak4H, Vygotch, STBotD, Black Kite, VolkovBot, TXiKiBoT, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, JhsBot, Glorfindel83, SieBot, Huzzahmaster018, Sun Creator, Addbot, Johannesbjarki, Tassedethe, Kiril Simeonovski, Yobot, Ptbogourou, Citation bot, ArthurBot, GrandMattster, MrsHudson, Sirgopster, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, John85, DrilBot, TjBot, Jayson-Sunshine, WikitanvirBot, Grondilu, ZéroBot, H3llBot, ChuispastonBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, Khazar2, Makecat-bot, GretDrabba, Monkbob and Anonymous: 45
- **Grünfeld Defence, Naderian Variation** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gr%C3%BCnfeld\\_Defence%2C\\_Naderian\\_Variation?oldid=712806265](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gr%C3%BCnfeld_Defence%2C_Naderian_Variation?oldid=712806265) *Contributors:* Alansohn, Rjwilmsi, Bubba73, Reedy, Hmains, Brittle heaven, VartanM, VZakharov, Sun Creator, Yobot, BEPETEHO, Emildaed, AnomieBOT, Kelisa English, Ulric1313, LiiHelpa, MrsHudson, PeskyGnat, Locobot, Adrignola, BukMer, DrilBot, I Do Care, Kolobochek, Yegishe, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Toccata quarta, Forgot to put name, Monkbob and Anonymous: 6
- **Queen's Indian Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen%7B%20Indian\\_Defense?oldid=658958323](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen%7B%20Indian_Defense?oldid=658958323) *Contributors:* Zundark, Webhat, Diberri, Djinn112, No Guru, ZeroOne, Cburnett, Jacobolus, GregorB, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, Abu Amaal, Conscious, Zwbob, Cobblet, That Guy, From That Show!, Colonel Tom, Whispering, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, JohnCD, Thijs!bot, Qwyrxian, Albmont, Tedickey, Baccyak4H, Ahjulta, Pawnkingthree, VolkovBot, MaxBrowne, Swedish fusilier, Sun Creator, Addbot, Johannesbjarki, Tassedethe, Gebminds, Luckas-bot, Yobot, ArthurBot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, EmausBot, WikitanvirBot, ZéroBot, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Jkmaskell, Toccata quarta, MyTuppence, Epicgenius and Anonymous: 34
- **Neo-Indian Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Indian\\_Attack?oldid=641783934](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Indian_Attack?oldid=641783934) *Contributors:* Rich Farmbrough, Sjakalle, Bubba73, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Joe Gatt, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Yobot, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, Erik9bot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 6
- **Torre Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torre\\_Attack?oldid=709255629](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torre_Attack?oldid=709255629) *Contributors:* Camembert, No Guru, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Cobblet, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, Ioscus, Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, Yurell, Headbomb, Black Kite, Ilfurawt, Blahblah5555, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Yobot, ArthurBot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, FrescoBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Toccata quarta, Francois-Pier, Monkbob and Anonymous: 19
- **Nimzo-Indian Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimzo-Indian\\_Defence?oldid=709129389](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nimzo-Indian_Defence?oldid=709129389) *Contributors:* Zundark, Camembert, Gbroles, Cyde, RedWolf, Lupin, No Guru, Andris, Matt Crypto, SWAdair, Wmahan, Neile, Klin-enwiki, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Ronark, Jacobolus, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Cobblet, That Guy, From That Show!, Silly rabbit, DoctorW, Colonies

Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Senor Pooop, Przemek Jahr, SyG, Hbent, Anonywiki, Idioma-bot, R00723r0, VolkovBot, Takuya Kanbara, Chesschampion, AlleborgoBot, Mightymax1, Hxhbot, WilhelmHH-enwiki, Swedish fusilier, Sun Creator, Addbot, Johannesbjarki, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Amirobot, Citation bot, Spaidaris, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Haskell.0, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Mentac, TjBot, Alph Bot, LegesRomanorum, Pete Hobbs, GFHund, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Toccata quarta, MyTuppence, RynMasters, Monkbob, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 52

- **Bogo-Indian Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bogo-Indian\\_Defence?oldid=641772160](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bogo-Indian_Defence?oldid=641772160) *Contributors:* Camembert, Djinn112, Jao, No Guru, Andris, Wmahan, Neilc, ZeroOne, Ronark, Jacobolus, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, Zwobot, SmackBot, Colonel Tom, Verrai, Shalom Yechiel, Fuhghettaboutit, Red 81, Thijs!bot, JAnDbot, The Transhumanist, Baccyak4H, JhsBot, AlleborgoBot, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Addbot, Johannesbjarki, LaaknorBot, BepBot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Kyucasio, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta and Anonymous: 21
- **Old Indian Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old\\_Indian\\_Defense?oldid=641262045](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Indian_Defense?oldid=641262045) *Contributors:* Camembert, Andycjp, ZeroOne, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, Falphin, Moskvax, Nylex, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Shalom Yechiel, Cream147, Thijs!bot, Perlnerd666, Namtaru, Black Kite, SieBot, OTAVIO1981, Rossen4, Addbot, Download, LaaknorBot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Homobot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, PeskyGnat, BukMer, Hushpuckena, BenzolBot, EmausBot, Solarra, Maxim11maxim, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, THE PITZ of the project, Monkbob and Anonymous: 11
- **Budapest Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Budapest\\_Gambit?oldid=697246322](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Budapest_Gambit?oldid=697246322) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Adam78, DocWatson42, No Guru, H Padleckas, Salvadors, ZeroOne, Fenya-enwiki, Sjakalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, GünniX, YurikBot, Jpbowen, Krakatoa, DeadEyeArrow, Cobblet, NeilN, SmackBot, Chris the speller, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Sasata, ChrisCork, CmdrObot, Wfaxon, Thijs!bot, Mibelz, Mack2, Darklilac, LegitimateAndEvenCompelling, The Transhumanist, SyG, JPG-GR, Gallicrow, Oliver-hh, Pawnkingthree, DorganBot, FrankEldonDixon, Inwind, TreasuryTag, TXiKiBoT, Certiorari, Voorlandt, Broadbot, Runewiki777, OTAVIO1981, Derekslater, Bot-Multichill, Neil Parker, Hobartimus, Anakin101, Meisterkoch, Swedish fusilier, Ikaria, Ftbhrygvn, Sun Creator, Iohannes Animusus, BOTarate, Aitias, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Hot200245, Favonian, Zorrobot, Yobot, Gongshow, AnomieBOT, Ulric1313, Citation bot, LilHelpa, Gensanders, MrsHudson, BukMer, Cekli829, Hushpuckena, FrescoBot, DrilBot, RjwilmsiBot, TjBot, Alzarian16, John of Reading, ZéroBot, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, רֵאָרְדֵן פֿלֵי, NordhornerII, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Monkbob, Faranan2030 and Anonymous: 36
- **Black Knights' Tango** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_Knights'\\_Tango?oldid=678938293](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Knights'_Tango?oldid=678938293) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Camembert, Mike Rosoft, ZeroOne, Cdc, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, Gdrbot, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Colonel Tom, Shalom Yechiel, The Transhumanist, AlexiusHoratius, FrankEldonDixon, TXiKiBoT, Voorlandt, PipepBot, Newzild, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Hushpuckena, RedBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 9
- **Catalan Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catalan\\_Opening?oldid=682938328](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catalan_Opening?oldid=682938328) *Contributors:* Camembert, Charles Matthews, RedWolf, Asparagus, Giftlite, No Guru, Neile, Sonjaaa, Bob.v.R, Boone, Dmr2, ZeroOne, Causa sui, Sjakalle, Quale, Bubba73, Colonel Tom, Tonipares, Drkirkby, Shalom Yechiel, Yrodro, Przemek Jahr, Txomin, Baccyak4H, TXiKiBoT, Rei-bot, MaxBrowne, SieBot, Niceguyedc, Sun Creator, Rossen4, DumZiBoT, MystBot, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, DemocraticLuntz, Shotcallerballerballer, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Sirgorpster, BukMer, EmausBot, John of Reading, Bootvis, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Garybekker, Toccata quarta, SkateTier, Cupo89 and Anonymous: 26
- **Blackmar-Diemer Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackmar%E2%80%93Diemer\\_Gambit?oldid=689497366](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackmar%E2%80%93Diemer_Gambit?oldid=689497366) *Contributors:* Aofi, Sonjaaa, Bob.v.R, ThreeE, Byrial, ZeroOne, Chvsanchez, BlankVerse, Quale, Bubba73, Cjpuffin, YurikBot, Eskimbot, Betacommand, Bluebot, TimBentley, Shalom Yechiel, CmdrObot, Mack2, Tws45, The Transhumanist, Newbie1412, Anonywiki, AlexLane, StAnselm, Khvalamde, Artichoker, Sun Creator, HarriVBOT, Rossen4, XLinkBot, SilvonenBot, MystBot, Addbot, Lightbot, Zorrobot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Nicholas Fahy, AnomieBOT, ChristopheS, Mikerowe2, Citation bot, MrsHudson, KommX, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, Jlaire, Hobbes Goodyear, EmausBot, Pete Hobbs, H3llBot, Mlang.Finn, Ihardlythinkso, Cwmhiraeth, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, Blnocchi, ChrisGualtieri, ASM999 and Anonymous: 42
- **Alapin-Diemer Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French\\_Defence?oldid=713154397](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Defence?oldid=713154397) *Contributors:* Zundark, Arvindn, Camembert, Pizza Puzzle, Robbot, RedWolf, Cornellier, Aidfarh, EvanED, No Guru, Gamaliel, Zaphod Beeblebrox, Andris, Matt Crypto, Neile, Chowbok, Andycjp, PhDP, ThreeE, Byrial, Dmr2, ZeroOne, Chi Sigma, CanisRufus, Gilgamesh he, Causa sui, Shenme, Viriditas, La goutte de pluie, Grahbudd, Knucmo2, WhiteC, Adrian.benko, CygnusPius, Jacobolus, GregorB, Sjakalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, FlaBot, Dje123, WarmasterKron, Nylex, YurikBot, Gavinwilson, Introgressive, Krakatoa, Calaschysm, Cobblet, KnightRider-enwiki, Thegn, TimBentley, Silly rabbit, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Ioscus, Courcelles, Telrod, Cryptic C62, Wfaxon, Thijs!bot, Chipka, Xolom, SmokeyTheCat, Mack2, JAnDbot, Magioladitis, AaronCBurke, Omerzu, Albmont, Anonywiki, Manuel0302, Pawnkingthree, Dinochess3, Idioma-bot, Black Kite, TXiKiBoT, Voorlandt, Anna Lincoln, MaxBrowne, Broadbot, Synthebot, Shirleyepaul, WereSpielChequers, Fricasso, Abhishikt, Anchor Link Bot, Loren.wilton, Kanesue, ClueBot, Newzild, Swedish fusilier, Auntof6, Sun Creator, Baoball, Rossen4, Against the current, Matma Rex, Addbot, Ronhjones, LaaknorBot, Renatokeshet, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Mohsenkazempur, Yoavd, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Amirobot, Kwanzaa12, Materials scientist, ArthurBot, Spaidaris, Lefthandsketch, MrsHudson, Gilo1969, BarryNL, Dirrival, PeskyGnat, IShadowed, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Bjóðólfur, RedBot, Orenburg1, Castor Affairé, Alzarian16, Bluekingj, EmausBot, Laszlovszky András, ZéroBot, Bendayan, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Checkrepublic, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Jb31415, Toccata quarta, Proxyma, BattyBot, He to Hecuba, Makecat-bot, Francois-Pier, ASM999, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 117
- **Diemer-Duhm Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French\\_Defence?oldid=713154397](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Defence?oldid=713154397) *Contributors:* Zundark, Arvindn, Camembert, Pizza Puzzle, Robbot, RedWolf, Cornellier, Aidfarh, EvanED, No Guru, Gamaliel, Zaphod Beeblebrox, Andris, Matt Crypto, Neile, Chowbok, Andycjp, PhDP, ThreeE, Byrial, Dmr2, ZeroOne, Chi Sigma, CanisRufus, Gilgamesh he, Causa sui, Shenme, Viriditas, La goutte de pluie, Grahbudd, Knucmo2, WhiteC, Adrian.benko, CygnusPius, Jacobolus, GregorB, Sjakalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, FlaBot, Dje123, WarmasterKron, Nylex, YurikBot, Gavinwilson, Introgressive, Krakatoa, Calaschysm, Cobblet, KnightRider-enwiki, Thegn, TimBentley, Silly rabbit, Colonies Chris, Shalom Yechiel, Ioscus, Courcelles, Telrod, Cryptic C62, Wfaxon, Thijs!bot, Chipka, Xolom, SmokeyTheCat, Mack2, JAnDbot, Magioladitis, AaronCBurke, Omerzu, Albmont, Anonywiki, Manuel0302, Pawnkingthree, Dinochess3, Idioma-bot, Black Kite, TXiKiBoT, Voorlandt, Anna Lincoln, MaxBrowne, Broadbot, Synthebot, Shirleyepaul, WereSpielChequers, Fricasso, Abhishikt, Anchor Link Bot, Loren.wilton, Kanesue, ClueBot, Newzild, Swedish fusilier, Auntof6, Sun Creator, Baoball, Rossen4, Against the current, Matma Rex, Addbot, Ronhjones, LaaknorBot, Renatokeshet, Lightbot, Kiril Simeonovski, Mohsenkazempur, Yoavd, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Amirobot, Kwanzaa12, Materials scientist, ArthurBot, Spaidaris, Lefthandsketch, MrsHudson, Gilo1969, BarryNL, Dirrival, PeskyGnat, IShadowed, Adrignola, BukMer,

Hushpuckena, Þjóðólfr, RedBot, Orenburg1, Castor Affairé, Alzarian16, Bluekingj, EmausBot, Laszlovszky András, ZéroBot, Bendayan, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Checkrepublic, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Jb31415, Toccata quarta, Proxyma, BattyBot, He to Hecuba, Makecat-bot, Francois-Pier, ASM999, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 117

- **London System** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London\\_System?oldid=698782940](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London_System?oldid=698782940) *Contributors:* Merovingian, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, SmackBot, Accurizer, West coast, Cryptic C62, Alaibot, Altamel, MaxBrowne, Johnanth, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Ad-dbot, AnomieBOT, Xqbot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, Jaxdelaguere, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, WikiPuppies, ChrisGualtieri, Monkbob, ASM999 and Anonymous: 18
- **Richter-Veresov Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richter-Veresov\\_Attack?oldid=641787021](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richter-Veresov_Attack?oldid=641787021) *Contributors:* Camembert, No Guru, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Bubba73, Krakatoa, BOT-Superzerocool, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, VolkovBot, Pixel-Bot, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Ronald Reuel, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Ulric1313, ArthurBot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, FrescoBot, EmausBot, ZéroBot, H3llBot, Aschwole, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Toccata quarta, Ralmoritz, Monkbob and Anonymous: 9
- **Benoni Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benoni\\_Defense?oldid=700833867](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benoni_Defense?oldid=700833867) *Contributors:* Zundark, Evercat, Webhat, Everyking, No Guru, Bob.v.R, ZeroOne, Wareh, BD2412, Sjakkalle, Quale, Biederman, Bubba73, YurikBot, Gaius Cornelius, Cobblet, Bob Hu, Marc Kupper, Colonies Chris, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Eastfrisian, Smile a While, CKaL, The Transhumanist, Albmont, Baccyak4H, Calidore Chase, Anonymous Dissident, Voorlandt, SieBot, Cwkmall, Sasha Krotov, Swedish fusilier, Farannan, Sun Creator, SchreiberBike, Akavall, Rossen4, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckyz, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Citation bot, ArthurBot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, A.amitkumar, Hushpuckena, Haeinous, ElNuevoEinstein, Trappist the monk, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Borman63, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, QuantumElf, Signedzzz and Anonymous: 32
- **Benko Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benko\\_Gambit?oldid=694907371](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benko_Gambit?oldid=694907371) *Contributors:* Zundark, Rmhermen, Camembert, Komap, Eric119, RedWolf, No Guru, Bob.v.R, DragonflySixtyseven, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Causa sui, Tabletop, Fenyá-enwiki, Sjakkalle, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, Gangster Octopus, WTHarvey, YurikBot, Krakatoa, Cobblet, VodkaJazz, Ilmari Karonen, Eskimbot, Alan McBeth, Chris the speller, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Aiwendil42, ShelfSkewed, Thijs!bot, Sherbrooke, Escarbot, The Transhumanist, Baccyak4H, What-teaux, LordAnubisBOT, Idioma-bot, Harfarhs, Ilfuria.awt, Rei-bot, MaxBrowne, Billingham, SieBot, OTAVIO1981, Tommetje, Sun Creator, Iohannes Animusus, SilvonenBot, Addbot, DOI bot, Tassedethe, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Amirobot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Citation bot 1, MondalorBot, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, Robnator, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, AvocadoBot, Toccata quarta, DocFido, Monkbob, KasparBot and Anonymous: 25
- **Blumenfeld Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blumenfeld\\_Gambit?oldid=690562946](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blumenfeld_Gambit?oldid=690562946) *Contributors:* Quale, FlaBot, TimBentley, Oceanh, The Transhumanist, TAnthony, A4bot, MaxBrowne, Alexbot, Sun Creator, Addbot, LaaknorBot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Cekli829, Hushpuckena, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, AvocadoBot, ChrisGualtieri, Monkbob and Anonymous: 2
- **English Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English\\_Defence?oldid=641773940](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_Defence?oldid=641773940) *Contributors:* Rich Farmbrough, Quale, Krakatoa, Addbot, Luckas-bot, FrescoBot, Fryedk, Jesse V., Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Arunprasathame and Anonymous: 7
- **Keres Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keres\\_Defence?oldid=641781337](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keres_Defence?oldid=641781337) *Contributors:* Jao, R. fiend, Rich Farmbrough, Mhowkins, ZeroOne, Tabor, Sjakkalle, Quale, Frenchman113, Bubba73, Falphin, Krakatoa, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Thegn, Shalom Yechiel, Thijs!bot, Magioladitis, Black Kite, VolkovBot, AlleborgoBot, Smartlypretty7, PixelBot, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Pokernikus, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Locobot, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Compo2, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Toccata quarta and Anonymous: 8
- **Dutch Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch\\_Defence?oldid=705894720](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch_Defence?oldid=705894720) *Contributors:* Camembert, Robbot, Djinn112, No Guru, Andris, Neil, Hayne, Roybb95-enwiki, Samboy, ZeroOne, CygnusPius, Jacobolus, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, WTHarvey, Roboto de Ajvol, YurikBot, Frederick R, Krakatoa, Cobblet, RobotJob, Thegn, Whispering, Brittle heaven, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, SubSeven, Farangfrog, Courcelles, Thijs!bot, Mibelz, Mack2, 100110100, TAnthony, Albmont, Baccyak4H, FruitMonkey, The Interloafer, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, Jasper Deng, Vysotsky, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Galoubet, Neptune5000, Shotcallerballerballer, Citation bot, MrsHudson, SassoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, Thehelpfulbot, RedBot, SpaceFlight89, Trappist the monk, Skitheboat1216, Ripchip Bot, ZéroBot, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, Movses-bot, Frietjes, Primergrey, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, Twyndyllyng, Monkbob, ASM999, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 29
- **Staunton Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Staunton\\_Gambit?oldid=651156931](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Staunton_Gambit?oldid=651156931) *Contributors:* Quale, Bubba73, Van der Hoorn, Krakatoa, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Thegn, Shalom Yechiel, Rigadoun, Alan.ca, Banedon, Przemek Jahr, Tws45, Sun Creator, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Cekli829, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Ugncreative Username and Anonymous: 4
- **Queen's Knight Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen%7Ds\\_Knight\\_Defense?oldid=641784290](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen%7Ds_Knight_Defense?oldid=641784290) *Contributors:* Andycjp, Chrislee, ZeroOne, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Krakatoa, Shalom Yechiel, SyG, Idioma-bot, Ilfuria.awt, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Shotcallerballerballer, Spaidieris, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Alzarian16, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 1
- **Englund Gambit** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Englund\\_Gambit?oldid=687398623](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Englund_Gambit?oldid=687398623) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Camembert, H Padleckas, ZeroOne, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, RussBot, Krakatoa, That Guy, From That Show!, Basalisk, Shalom Yechiel, Sobreira, Mack2, Tws45, Tilla, Srushie, Lightmouse, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Kelisa English, Citation bot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Locobot, Adrignola, BukMer, DivineAlpha, Citation bot 1, Pitlane02, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Lowercase sigmabot, Makecat-bot, Ginsuloft, K9re11 and Anonymous: 18
- **Polish Defense** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish\\_Defense?oldid=704715717](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_Defense?oldid=704715717) *Contributors:* Kpalion, ThreeE, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Miastko, RussBot, Krakatoa, Cobblet, Appleseed, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, TimBentley, Shalom Yechiel, Eastfrisian, Thijs!bot, Mibelz, Escarbot, TAMilo, SyG, Manderiko, Mufka, VolkovBot, Ilfuria.awt, Hsf-toshiba, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Luckas-bot, JackieBot, Citation bot, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, TjBot, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, KLBot2, Cliff12345, BattyBot and Anonymous: 5

- **Wade Defence** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wade\\_Defence?oldid=687942334](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wade_Defence?oldid=687942334) *Contributors:* ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Rjwilmsi, Quale, Bubba73, Falphin, Krakatoa, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Colonel Tom, Shalom Yechiel, Pawnkingthree, Ilfuria.awt, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Tassedethe, Luckas-bot, Yobot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, EmausBot, Pete Hobbs, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes and Anonymous: 6
- **Flank opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flank\\_opening?oldid=707548951](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flank_opening?oldid=707548951) *Contributors:* Quale, Bubba73, Cobblet, Hmains, Whispering, Cydebot, Thijs!bot, Idioma-bot, VolkovBot, Sun Creator, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Citation bot, MrsHudson, Citation bot 1, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Francois-Pier, ASM999 and Anonymous: 4
- **Larsen's Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larsen's\\_Opening?oldid=701495300](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larsen's_Opening?oldid=701495300) *Contributors:* Arvindn, David Edgar, No Guru, Andycjp, ThreeE, ZeroOne, Yonkie, Madzane, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Bgwhite, YurikBot, Frederick R, Krakatoa, Cinik, Cobblet, KnightRider-enwiki, DCGeist, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, ThePacker, JoeBot, Banedon, Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, JAnDbot, Lady Mondegreen, ClueBot, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, SilvonenBot, Menthaxpiperita, Addbot, MrOllie, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Citation bot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Hushpuckena, Mr. Comodor, Citation bot 1, HRoestBot, Double sharp, LegesRomanorum, ZéroBot, Alexlatham96, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Tkarcher, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, BG19bot, Shreyas61196, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 30
- **English Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English\\_Opening?oldid=712607414](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_Opening?oldid=712607414) *Contributors:* Zundark, Camembert, Frans2000, Robbot, Webhat, Asparagus, Ludraman, Djinn112, Andris, Edcolins, Neile, Andycjp, Modargo, Rubicon, ZeroOne, Gilgamesh he, RJFJR, Gene Nygaard, Jacobolus, GregorB, Mandarax, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Kmorozov, YurikBot, Red Slash, DanMS, Krakatoa, Acwazytomato, Cobblet, Eskimbot, Colonies Chris, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, DaDoc540, DanQuigley, MTSbot-enwiki, Eastfrisian, CmdrObot, Dynzmoar, Banedon, Mack2, Michig, Rothorpe, Magioladitis, JNW, Albmont, Baccyak4H, Mokru, STBotD, A4bot, Anonymous Dissident, MaxBrowne, Synthebot, Abhishikt, WilhelmHH-enwiki, Alexbot, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, Arbitrarily0, Mohsenkazempur, Yobot, AnomieBOT, Ullric1313, Citation bot, ArthurBot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Locobot, Adrignola, BukMer, WHPratt, Hushpuckena, FoxBot, RjwilmsiBot, EmausBot, ZéroBot, H3llBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Vinicius Machado Vogt, Helpful Pixie Bot, ZirconiumX, Toccata quarta, Cliff12345, Cyberbot II, Francois-Pier, Monkbot, King Nook and Anonymous: 62
- **Bird's Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bird's\\_Opening?oldid=690146574](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bird's_Opening?oldid=690146574) *Contributors:* Camembert, No Guru, Neile, ThreeE, Byrial, Modargo, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Art LaPella, Themindset, Jacobolus, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, DoubleBlue, Falphin, War-masterKron, YurikBot, Krakatoa, BOT-Superzerocool, Cobblet, SmackBot, Silly rabbit, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Birdsf4, Ligulembot, Cantoni-enwiki, Mibelz, CharlotteWebb, Matthew Proctor, Mack2, JAnDbot, The Transhumanist, SyG, Albmont, Baccyak4H, Pawnkingthree, Use the force, Chessnerd, Deevrod, Newzild, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, XLinkBot, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Opus88888, SpBot, Tassedethe, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, TaBOT-zerem, Legobot II, MrsHudson, Adrignola, FrescoBot, RedBot, Lotje, CarlesMartin, Auxysfox, EmausBot, ChuispastonBot, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Green Rain, ChrisGualtieri, Dylanvt, DocFido, Lugia2453, Wikiew, Tjust85, Shreyas61196, King Nook and Anonymous: 44
- **Benko's Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King's\\_Fianchetto\\_Opening?oldid=703561649](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King's_Fianchetto_Opening?oldid=703561649) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Dino, Sonjaaa, ZeroOne, Circeus, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, JulesH, Höyhens, SmackBot, Ppntori, Shalom Yechiel, Eastfrisian, CapitalR, ShelfSkewed, Cream147, Thijs!bot, The Transhumanist, Rothorpe, Spinach Dip, Rei-bot, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, OTAVIO1981, Swedish fusilier, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Addbot, Ronald Reuel, Lightbot, Zorrobot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Spaideris, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Citation bot 1, Double sharp, Bounce1337, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Kaigew and Anonymous: 21
- **Zukertort Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zukertort\\_Opening?oldid=698404795](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zukertort_Opening?oldid=698404795) *Contributors:* Dino, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, Sandstein, Cobblet, SmackBot, EdGl, Tedickey, JaGa, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Spaideris, MrsHudson, RibotBOT, Citation bot 1, A412, RjwilmsiBot, EmausBot, Phoenixthebird, ChuispastonBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Aguada, Toccata quarta, Phobos4798, Kevin12xd and Anonymous: 8
- **Réti Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9ti\\_Opening?oldid=695721164](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9ti_Opening?oldid=695721164) *Contributors:* Dino, Cyrius, No Guru, Neile, Sonjaaa, ThreeE, ZeroOne, Nsaa, Ronark, Jacobolus, Fenyá-enwiki, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, FlaBot, YurikBot, Cobblet, NeilN, David A Bozzini, SmackBot, Silly rabbit, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, MTSbot-enwiki, Przemek Jahr, SyG, Baccyak4H, SwiftBot, TXiKiBot, SieBot, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Spaideris, Xqbot, MrsHudson, J04n, BarryNL, Adrignola, BukMer, Citation bot 1, HRoestBot, MastiBot, EmausBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Green Rain, Helpful Pixie Bot, Toccata quarta, Chessmesiter and Anonymous: 37
- **Irregular chess opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irregular\\_chess\\_opening?oldid=591821246](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irregular_chess_opening?oldid=591821246) *Contributors:* Lir, Dominus, Eric119, Jod, Frieda, Dysprosia, Jmartinezot, Lord Emsworth, Andris, Neile, Sonjaaa, ZeroOne, Themindset, Sjakkalle, Melanogaster-enwiki, Quale, Bubba73, Quicksilvre, Krakatoa, Cobblet, SmackBot, Chris the speller, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, Cream147, Przemek Jahr, Thijs!bot, AlleborgoBot, Sun Creator, BOTarate, DumZiBoT, Addbot, Legobot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Citation bot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, Citation bot 1, RedBot, RjwilmsiBot, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Bever, Monkbot and Anonymous: 13
- **Anderssen's Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anderssen's\\_Opening?oldid=641771837](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anderssen's_Opening?oldid=641771837) *Contributors:* Arvindn, ZeroOne, Rishiboy, Sjakkalle, HaZe-enwiki, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Krakatoa, BOT-Superzerocool, Łukasz M. P. Pastuszczyk, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Rigadoun, MTSbot-enwiki, Eastfrisian, CmdrObot, Thijs!bot, JAnDbot, The Transhumanist, Csbarrett, Voorlandt, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Pbtogourou, Csigabi, Xqbot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, Bounce1337, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Zeelur, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot and Anonymous: 14
- **Ware Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ware\\_Opening?oldid=641760479](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ware_Opening?oldid=641760479) *Contributors:* Hoho-enwiki, Nickptar, ThreeE, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Circeus, Sjakkalle, HaZe-enwiki, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Willie on Wheels, That Guy, From That Show!, Colonel Tom, TimBentley, Sim man, Red 81, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, DumZiBoT, Chesslover96, Addbot, Luckas-bot, Citation bot, Xqbot, Wzdew, Adrignola, BukMer, Citation bot 1, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Ugncreative Username and Anonymous: 11
- **Sokolsky Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sokolsky\\_Opening?oldid=713400145](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sokolsky_Opening?oldid=713400145) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Camembert, Lir, Michael Hardy, Dominus, Eric119, KW-enwiki, Webhat, Dbenbenn, Andris, Neile, Sonjaaa, Samboy, ZeroOne, VishalB, VivaEmilyDavies, Dave.Dunford, Jacobolus, Sjakkalle, HaZe-enwiki, Quale, Bubba73, Falphin, Russavia, Bgwhite, Roboto de Ajvol, The Rambling Man, Krakatoa, BOT-Superzerocool, Cinik, That Guy, From That Show!, SmackBot, Roberto Cruz, Chairman S., Bluebot, Colonies Chris, Sim man, Shalom

Yechiel, Rigadoun, MTSbot-enwiki, Red 81, JAnDbot, SyG, TXiKiBoT, JhsBot, OTAVIO1981, Hsf-toshiba, Rhododendrites, Sun Creator, Masugly, SilvonenBot, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Citation bot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Citation bot 1, I dream of horses, Bounce1337, EmausBot, ZéroBot, Alexlatham96, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Makecat-bot, GretDrabba, Monkbob, Marektrokenheim and Anonymous: 16

- **Saragossa Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saragossa\\_Opening?oldid=678372161](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saragossa_Opening?oldid=678372161) *Contributors:* Zundark, DavidWBrooks, ThreeE, ZeroOne, CanisRufus, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Krakatoa, BOT-Superzerocool, Cobblet, FrozenPurpleCube, SmackBot, Moez, TimBentley, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Red 81, SyG, TXiKiBoT, MaxBrowne, Gorpik, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Chesslover96, Qgil-WMF, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, AnomieBOT, Citation bot, ArthurBot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Citation bot 1, Balajiganapathi, HRoestBot, EleferenBot, ZéroBot, Alexlatham96, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Royalblue64, Alexander Earlheart and Anonymous: 14
- **Mieses Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mieses\\_Opening?oldid=649998828](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mieses_Opening?oldid=649998828) *Contributors:* ZeroOne, Lovingboth, Sjakkalle, Quale, S Chapin, Bubba73, Tommy Kronkvist, Krakatoa, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Rigadoun, WinterSpw, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, PotentialDanger, DumZiBoT, Lab-oratory, Addbot, Lightbot, Mro, Luckas-bot, ArthurBot, MrsHudson, Adrignola, BukMer, Alexlatham96, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Dexbot and Anonymous: 8
- **Van 't Kruijs Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Van\\_'t\\_Kruijs\\_Opening?oldid=698403051](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Van_'t_Kruijs_Opening?oldid=698403051) *Contributors:* Furrykef, Xyzzyva, Lucky 6.9, AndyCjp, Bob.v.R, ZeroOne, JRM, Jacobolus, GregorB, Sjakkalle, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, BOT-Superzerocool, Cobblet, That Guy, From That Show!, SmackBot, Shalom Yechiel, MTSbot-enwiki, Kripkenstein, CapitalR, Przemek Jahr, Travelbird, Thijs!bot, SyG, Llamabr, Hsf-toshiba, Sun Creator, Rossen4, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, DOI bot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, Citation bot, Xqbot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, Adrignola, BukMer, Citation bot 1, Alph Bot, Alzarian16, EmausBot, Alexlatham96, Ihardlythinkso, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 13
- **Barnes Opening** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barnes\\_Opening?oldid=649999235](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barnes_Opening?oldid=649999235) *Contributors:* Furrykef, Mattflaschen, Sonjaaa, ZeroOne, Art LaPella, Tony Sidaway, Sjakkalle, HaZe-enwiki, Quale, Bubba73, Brighterorange, YurikBot, Welsh, BOT-Superzerocool, Pathless, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, MTSbot-enwiki, Zickzack, The Transhumanist, SchumiUCD, Black Kite, Voorlandt, MaxBrowne, VirtualEarth, Sun Creator, DumZiBoT, Chesslover96, Lab-oratory, Addbot, DOI bot, Lightbot, Luckas-bot, EdwardLane, Pbtotgourou, AnomieBOT, Csigabi, Xqbot, MrsHudson, GrouchoBot, PeskyGnat, Adrignola, Citation bot 1, LegesRomanorum, Cobaltcigs, Rcsprinter123, Alexlatham96, Ihardlythinkso, ClueBot NG, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, LogicalSpartan247, Klipsy and Anonymous: 21
- **Grob's Attack** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grob%7Ds\\_Attack?oldid=699248264](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grob%7Ds_Attack?oldid=699248264) *Contributors:* Arvindn, Dominus, Ihcoyc, Scott, Haukurth, Sverdrup, Nickpelling, Sonjaaa, Bob.v.R, Bosmon, SocratesJedi, ZeroOne, Themindset, Jacobolus, Agthorr, Quale, Bubba73, YurikBot, Van der Hoorn, Cryptic, Krakatoa, BOT-Superzerocool, Sam Sloan, Cobblet, SmackBot, Sim man, Shalom Yechiel, Ligulembot, RBPierce, Red 81, Thijs!bot, DaQuirin, Just Chilling, Anonywiki, KylieTastic, VolkovBot, MaxBrowne, AlleborgoBot, OTAVIO1981, Sun Creator, Addbot, ZorroBot, Luckas-bot, Yobot, HelloAnglais, Citation bot, Terminatore, MrsHudson, PeskyGnat, Locobot, Adrignola, Citation bot 1, Alph Bot, Tisane, Sorbitol, Fæ, ZeFrogge, Frietjes, Helpful Pixie Bot, Proxyrna, Chess SuperGM and Anonymous: 22
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