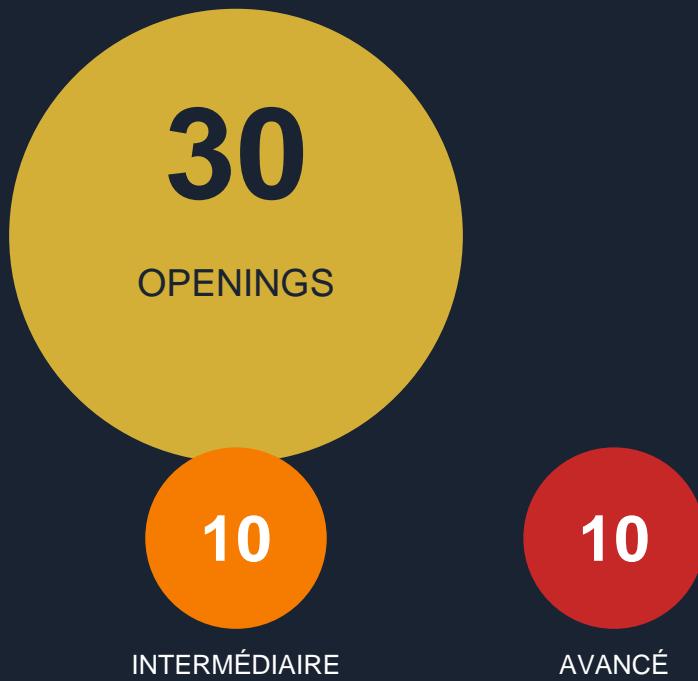


ELO BOOSTER

The Ultimate Opening Guide



- ✓ Strategic ideas explained
- ✓ Traps to know with responses
- ✓ Detailed plans for each side
- ✓ Typical mistakes to avoid

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MODERN DEFENSE

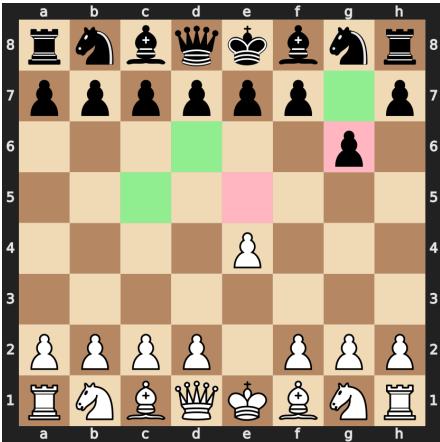
Level: Beginner

Champions: Seirawan, Speelman, Tiger Hillarp Pers...

Robatsch • 1.e4 g6

■ 55%

■ 45%



MAIN IDEA

The most flexible hypermodern defense! With ...g6 and ...Bg7, Black attacks White's center from afar without committing to a pawn structure. The idea is to let White build a center, then strike with ...c5, ...d6, ...e5 or ...d5 depending on the setup. It's like the Pirc but even more flexible since Black delays ...Nf6. Perfect for players who like to improvise!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Building a huge center then not using it: the pawns become targets
- Ignoring the Bg7: this Bishop is dangerous on the long diagonal
- Attacking without development: piece activity is key

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Being too passive: Black must attack the center at some point
- Delaying development too much: ...Nf6, ...d6, ...0-0 must come
- Playing ...d5 at the wrong time: can be premature

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Pawn g6 + Bishop:** g6 then Bg7 - the fianchetto is the basic idea
- Pawn c5:** Counter-attack on d4 - thematic in many lin...

- Pawn d6:** Flexible - allows ...Nf6 (Pirc) or ...e5/...Ne7 ...
- King:** Quick kingside castle after ...Bg7 - essenti...

- Knight g8:** Nf6 transposes to Pirc, or ...Ne7 stays in th...
- Knight b8:** ...Nc6 or ...Nd7 depending on chosen plan

TRAPS TO KNOW



Center Trap

After 2.d4, White has an ideal center. If Black plays ...Bg7 without a plan, White crushes with Nc3, Be3, Qd2, 0-0-0 and attack. AVOID (Black): Play ...d6 and prepare ...c5 or ...e5 to contest.



Attack Trap

If Black is passive, White plays Be3, Qd2, Bh6! (exchange the Bg7), then 0-0-0 and h4-h5 to open the Black King. AVOID (Black): Play ...d6, ...c6 or ...c5 quickly for counterplay.



f-Pawn Trap

3.f4!? aggressive. If ...d6 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.e5!? dx5 6.fxe5 Nd5 7.c4 Black loses the Knight or has a difficult position. AVOID (Black): Play ...d5! or ...c5 to contest the center before f4-e5.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Classical Modern

2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.Be3 ...
■ 55% ■ 45%

Blancs:

Attack System! Bh6 (exchanges Bg7) for 0-0, then d4-d5 to open the center. ...h5 to open the center.



Pterodactyl

2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 c5 4.dxc5 ...
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:

The d4-c5 is aggressive but exposes e4-d2, Ne5, Bg7 and rapid development to exploit ...d6 with playable position.



Hippopotamus

2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.Nf3 N ...
■ 55% ■ 45%

Blancs:

Black is very solid but passive. Bd3, Be3, Qd2 and h4 for a weakness, and at the right moment. Hard to

SCOTCH GAME

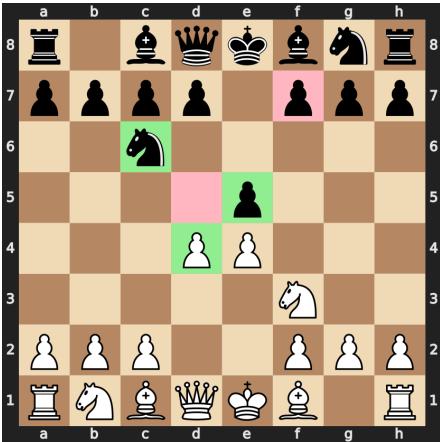
Level: Beginner

Champions: Kasparov, Carlsen, Caruana

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4

■ 54%

■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

White immediately opens the center with d4, avoiding the long theoretical lines of the Ruy Lopez. After 3...exd4 4.Nxd4, the Knight is beautifully centralized and White has rapid development. The idea is to get open positions with active piece play. This is an honest and direct opening, very popular with players who want concrete play.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Nxc6 bxc6 without reason: doubles the pawns but gives Black the center and the b-file
- Bc4 too early in certain lines: allows ...Nxe4! winning a pawn
- Neglecting development to attack: premature attack without developed pieces fails

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Premature ...Qh4?!: after Nc3! the Queen is exposed and White develops with tempo
- ...Bc5 without ...Nf6: the Bishop can be attacked by c3-d4 or Nb3
- Letting the Nd4 dominate: you must contest it with ...Nf6 or chase it with ...c5

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- **Nd4:** Already centralized! Can go to f5, b5 or sta...
- **Bf1:** c4 (aggressive, Scotch gambit) or e2/d3 (s...

- **Bc1:** Develop to e3 (supports d4) or c4 (targets f...
- **King:** Quick kingside castle, or sometimes 0-0-0 i...

- **Nb1:** Go to c3 to control d5 and support e4
- **Rooks:** Centralize on d1 and e1 to control the ope...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Queen Trap

After 4...Qh4?! 5.Nc3! (not g3?? Qxe4+) White threatens Ndb5 and Nd5. The Queen is misplaced and must flee. AVOID (Black): Don't bring out the Queen so early! Play ...Nf6 or ...Bc5.



Scotch Gambit

4.Bc4! (instead of Nxd4) sacrifices a pawn for development. After ...Bc5?! 5.c3! White recovers d4 with initiative. AVOID (Black): Play ...Nf6! attacking e4, or ...d6 solid.



Knight Trap

After 4...Nf6 5.Nxc6?! bxc6 Black has an excellent center with ...d5! and the b-file to attack. AVOID (White): Keep the Nd4 or play Nc3 first.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Classical

3...exd4 4.Nxd4 Bc5 5.Be3...
■52% ■48%

Blancs: c5! secures the Nd4, then prepares Qd5 and b6 castle. This is possible for...



Scotch Gambit

3...exd4 4.Bc4 Nf6 5.e5
■55% ■45%

Blancs: Sacrifice the d4 pawn for development. It blocks the Bc4 and prepares Ne5. After exd4 dxcc4, Black has good



Mieses Variation

3...exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nxc6...
■53% ■47%

Blancs: The doubled pawns are a problem for Black. He must develop quickly to activate pieces.

ITALIAN GAME

Level: Beginner

Champions: Morphy, Greco, Kasparov

Giuoco Piano • 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4

■ 54%

■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

The Bc4 directly targets f7, the weakest point on the board at the start of the game (defended only by the King). White can choose between a rapid attack (Ng5, sacrifices on f7) or slow positional play with d3, 0-0, c3 then d4. This is the classic opening of the Italian Renaissance, ideal for learning the fundamental principles of open games.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Premature d4 without c3: after ...exd4, White loses the center and time
- Neglecting castling: the King in the center is vulnerable to tactics on the e-file
- Qh5 too early (Scholar's Mate): easily parried by ...Qe7 or ...g6, and the Queen is exposed

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Premature ...Nxe4?: allows the Legal Trap with Bxf7+! or Nxf7 winning
- ...f6?: horribly weakens the a2-g8 diagonal and allows devastating sacrifices
- Ignoring the threat on f7: always watch for Ng5 or Qb3 attacking f7 and b7

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Bc1:** Develop to e3 (solid, defends d4) or g5 (aggressive)
- King:** Kingside castling is priority - the King is safest on the kingside

- Nb1:** Develop to c3 to control d5 and support d4
- Queen:** Avoid premature sorties (Qh5, Qf3) - keep ...

- Rooks:** After 0-0, place Re1 on the semi-open e-file
- Pawns:** Plan c3-d4 to build an ideal pawn center

TRAPS TO KNOW



Legal Trap

After 4.Nc3 Nxe4?? 5.Bxf7+! Kxf7 6.Nxe4 wins. AVOID: Never take e4 with the Knight! Play ...Bc5 or ...Be7 instead to develop normally.



Fried Liver Attack

4.Ng5 threatens Nxf7. If ...d5 5.exd5 Nxd5?? 6.Nxf7! wins. AVOID: After ...d5 exd5, play ...Na5! (not Nxd5) to chase the Bishop and recapture d5 later.



Scholar's Mate

Qh5 + Bc4 threatens Qxf7#. Beginner's trap! AVOID: Play ...Qe7! (defends f7 and threatens Qxe4+), or ...g6 then ...Nf6. The White Queen will be misplaced.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Giuoco Piano

3...Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4... ■54% ■46%

Blancs: Accept the isolated pawns, but pressure d5 and the e5 pawn center gives space and hinders White's



Evans Gambit

3...Bc5 4.b4!? Bxb4 5.c3 Ba5 ■53% ■47%

Blancs: Sacrifice the b4 pawn for development and pawn. After some clever play, ...Bb6 and return the pawn if



Two Knights Defense

3...Nf6 4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5 Na5 ■52% ■48%

Blancs: After Bb5+ c6 dxc6 bxc6, Nf6! causes the draw, but Black has strong initiative and prepares ...e5 to recover the

PHILIDOR DEFENSE

Level: Beginner

Champions: Philidor, Kramnik, Shirov

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6

■ 54%

■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

The solid response to 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3! With ...d6, Black defends e5 solidly but blocks the Bf8. The modern approach is ...Nf6, ...Be7, ...0-0, ...c6 then ...Nbd7 and ...Re8 preparing ...d5 or ...exd4 followed by ...d5. Philidor himself said 'pawns are the soul of chess' and this defense reflects that philosophy - solid structure over piece activity!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing d4 too early: after ...exd4 Nxd4 Black is fine
- Ignoring the ...d5 break: this frees Black's position
- Trading too many pieces: helps Black equalize

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Blocking the Bf8 forever: find a way to activate it via ...g6 or ...Be7-f8-g7
- Playing ...Bg4 too early: can be refuted by d4-d5
- Being too passive: the Hanham setup with ...Nbd7 is more active

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Pawn d6:** Defends e5 solidly but locks in the Bishop -...
- Knight b8:** Nc6 or Nd7 depending on plan - Nd7 prep...

- Knight g8:** Nf6 is natural but blocks ...f5, sometimes

- King:** Kingside castle after ...Be7 - very safe pos...

- Bishop f8:** Be7 first (frees the f8 square for the King), ...
- Pawn f:** ...f5! is the liberating move - breaks White'...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Legal Trap

After 3.Bc4 Bg4?? (classical mistake) 4.Nc3 Nc6 5.h3 Bh5 6.Nxe5!! Bxd1?? 7.Bxf7+ Ke7 8.Nd5# mate! AVOID (Black): Never play ...Bg4 in the Philidor! Play ...Be7 or ...Nf6.



Center Trap

3.d4 exd4 (forced otherwise d5 gains space) 4.Nxd4 and White has an ideal center. If ...Nf6? 5.Nc3 Be7 6.Bf4 Black is passive. AVOID (Black): Play 4...Nf6 5.Nc3 Be7 then ...0-0 and ...Re8 to prepare ...d5.



Endgame Trap

Normal position. If White plays 0-0 Be7 Re1 0-0 and Black can never play ...f5 because e5 falls! AVOID (Black): Play ...c6 and ...Qc7 to prepare ...d5, or ...h6 and ...g5 to prevent Bg5.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Hanham Variation

3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3 Nbd7 5.Bc...

■ 55% ■ 45%

Blancs: Standard d4-e4 center. Play 0-0 Be7 (prevents them from attacking the e2-KB) and ...Qc7. Prepare ...d5 or ...f5



Philidor Counterattack

3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.N...

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs: Steady center with Knight on d5. Develop Bf4 or Bf5. The move 0-0-0 is the goal to equalize.



Lion Variation

3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3 Nbd7 5.Bc...

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs: Steady position. Play Re1, h5, Bf3 and h6 to break with d5 or ...f5 to

PIRC DEFENSE

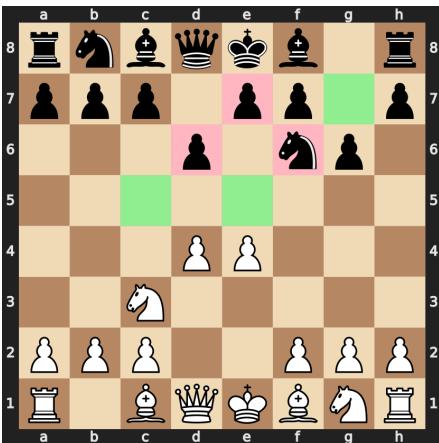
Level: Beginner

Champions: Pirc, Seirawan, Ivanchuk

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6

■ 54%

■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

The aggressive hypermodern defense! Black lets White build a big center with e4-d4, then attacks it with ...d6, ...Nf6, ...g6, ...Bg7 and later ...e5 or ...c5. The fianchettoed Bishop on g7 is a monster on the long diagonal. White often plays the Austrian Attack (f4) or Classical (Nf3, Be2), but Black has dynamic counterplay. It's the opening for players who love counter-attacking chess!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Overextending in the center: the pawns become targets for ...c5 or ...e5
- Ignoring the Bg7: this Bishop can become very powerful
- Attacking without development: piece coordination is key

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Being too passive: ...e5 or ...c5 must come to challenge the center
- Delaying castling: the King must be safe before starting counterplay
- Exchanging the Bg7: this Bishop is Black's best piece

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Pawn d6:**
Prepares the fianchetto and controls e5 - a...
- King:**
Quick kingside castle - the King is well def...

- Pawn g6 + Bishop:**
g6 then Bg7 - the Bishop becomes a mons...
- Knight b8:**
Nc6 or Nbd7 depending on plan - prepares...

- Knight f6:**
Attacks e4 and prepares ...0-0 - classical p...
- Pawn c or e:**
...c5 (attacks d4) or ...e5 (central) are the li...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Austrian Attack

4.f4?! Aggressive attack. White aims for e5 and f5. If Black is passive, the attack is devastating. **AVOID** (Black): Play ...Bg7, ...0-0, ...c5! immediately to counter-attack d4.



e5 Pawn Trap

If e5?! premature, Black plays ...Nfd7! then ...c5 and the e5 pawn is attacked. After dx5 dxe5, the center is open for the Bg7. **AVOID** (White): Prepare e5 with f4 or Be3 first.



Fianchetto Trap

Normal position. If White plays Bc4?! Black has ...c5! attacking d4, and if dx5 dxc5 the Bg7 is very active. **AVOID** (White): Play Be2 or Bd3, more solid than Bc4.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Classical

4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Be2 0-0 6.0-0 c6
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:

Solid development. Plans: a4 (to cover Ne5), b4 or c4 then central pressure or ...d6



Austrian Attack

4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Bd3 c5
■ 55% ■ 45%

Blancs:

Aggressive ...e5 or f5 to open counter-attack. If dx5 dxc5, the Bg7 dominates. ...Nc6,



150 Attack System

4.Bc3 Bg7 5.Qd2 0-0 6.f3 c6
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:

Nf3 with 0-0-0, Bh6. Exchange the Bg7, then h4/h5 to open the h-file.

SCANDINAVIAN DEFENSE

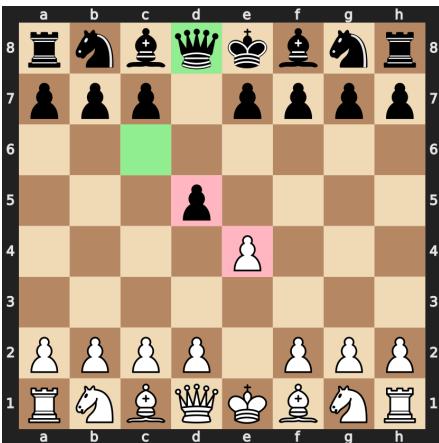
Centre Counter • 1.e4 d5

Level: Beginner

Champions: Tiviakov, Pytel, Brynell

■ 54%

■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

The simplest response to 1.e4! Black immediately attacks the e4 pawn with ...d5. After 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3, the Queen must move but Black develops quickly. The modern approach is ...Qa5 (keeping the Queen active) or ...Qd6 (defending d5). It's an opening with very little theory - Black knows the positions better than most White players. Perfect for club players who want practical chances!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing without a plan: Nc3, Nf3, d4, Bc4 is the standard setup
- Trying to 'punish' Black: the Scandinavian is sound, play normal chess
- Overestimating the Queen move: Black develops quickly after ...Qa5

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Playing ...Qxd5 then ...Qa5 without a plan: the Queen must find a good square
- Forgetting development: ...Nf6, ...Bf5/...Bg4, ...e6, ...c6 is the standard setup
- Playing ...Nf6 gambits without knowing the theory: can backfire

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Queen:**
After Qxd5 Nc3, retreat to a5 (aggressive) ...
- Pawn c:**
...c6 is essential to support d5 and prepare...

- Bishop c8:**
It's the key piece! Develop to f5 (classical) ...
- Bishop f8:**
Develop to e7 (solid) or g7 after ...g6 (fianc...

- Knights:**
Nf6 attacks e4 and develops, Nc6/Nd7 sup...
- King:**
Classical kingside castle after ...e6 and ...B...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Queen Trap

After 2...Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qa5 4.d4?? ...Qxd1+? No! 4...e5! and if 5.dxe5?? Qxe5+ wins a piece. AVOID (White): Play Nf3 or Bd2 before d4.



Gambit Trap

2...Nf6 (gambit) 3.d4?? ...Nxd5! Recovers the pawn with good play. AVOID (White): Play 3.Bb5+ or 3.c4 to keep the pawn or complicate.



Portuguese Trap

Portuguese Variation:
3...Qa5 4.d4 Nf6 5.g4?? (chases the Bishop) ...Bxc2!
wins the c2 pawn since the Queen defends. AVOID (White): Don't play g4 - develop normally with Nf3.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Modern Variation (Qa5)

2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qa5 4....
■54% ■46%

Blanks:
Develop Nf3, Bd2 (defends e4) and prepares castling. Keep central pressure with a ...c6, ...e6, ...Nb8/d7, ...Be7



Classical Variation (Qd6)

2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qd6 4....
■53% ■47%

Blanks:
Develop Nf3, Bd2 or Bc4, but not the Bc4 center is stronger. Prepare to open the game (d5, ...Bf5, ...c6 then ...e6



Scandinavian Gambit (Nf6)

2.exd5 Nf6 3.d4 Nxd5 4.c4...
■55% ■45%

Blanks:
Powerful c4-d4 center. Develop Nf3, Nc6, Bc4, and 0-0. The position changes after 0...Bf5, ...e6, ...Be7, ...Phe

LONDON SYSTEM

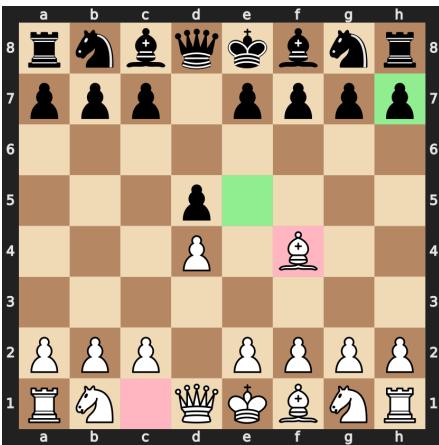
Level: Beginner

Champions: Carlsen, Kamsky, Jobava

London System • 1.d4 d5 2.Bf4

■ 53%

■ 47%



MAIN IDEA

The easiest system to learn! White plays the same moves regardless of Black's response: Bf4, e3, Nf3, Bd3, c3, Nbd2, 0-0. The structure is rock solid and the plan is always the same: build a pawn pyramid (d4-e3-c3) then attack on the kingside with Ne5, Qf3 or h4-h5. Ideal for beginners who want to avoid all theory and play familiar positions every game.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Letting the Bf4 get exchanged by ...Bd6: the Bishop is the key piece, retreat to g3 if threatened
- Playing e3 BEFORE Bf4: the Bishop stays locked in! Always bring out the Bishop first
- Forgetting to play c3: this pawn protects d4 and prevents ...Nb4 or ...Bb4

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Playing passively: Black must counter-attack in the center with ...c5 or ...e5
- Letting the white Knight settle on e5: this Knight becomes a monster, chase it with ...Nd7
- Ignoring the h4-h5 attack: if White pushes h5 without opposition, the attack can be strong

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Bc1:** ALWAYS to f4 on move 2 or 3 - that's the s...
- Bf1:** Bd3 targets h7, the Bd3+Qc2 battery can b...

e3 pawn: Supports d4 and frees the Bf1 - play AFTE...

Nb1: Nbd2 then Ne5 or Nf1-e3 to control central...

- Ng1:** Classical Nf3, then Ne5 when possible - str...
- King:** Classical kingside castle - the position is v...

TRAPS TO KNOW

Bishop Trap

If Black plays ...Bd6 to exchange the Bishop, retreat Bg3! After ...Bxg3 hxg3 White has the open h-file for attack. AVOID (White): Never let it be taken on f4 - Bg3 keeps the Bishop.

Knight Trap

White prepares Ne5. If Black ignores: Ne5 Nxe5?! dx5 and White dominates. Then Bd3 and Qh5 threatens mate on h7! AVOID (Black): Play ...e6 and ...Bd6 to control e5.

Queen Trap

After Bd3 and 0-0, the Qc2 + Bd3 battery targets h7. If Black castles without defending: Qc2 threatens Bxh7+! AVOID (Black): Play ...g6 or ...h6 before castling, or keep a Knight on f6.

MAIN VARIATIONS

Classical London

2...Nf6 3.e3 e6 4.Nf3 Bd6 ...
■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs:

After Bxg3 hxg3, the h-file is weakened, the Bishop on g3 is a target for the attack Ne5 and offers White pressure on ...c5 to counter-attack in the center.

Anti-King's Indian

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 g6 3.Nc3 d...

Blancs:

Not just the fianchetto, the King's side is less effective with so many pawns on d and e files. Play Nf2 or Nc3, c4, 0-0 and seek ...e5 to open the center.

Jobava London

2...Nf6 3.Nc3 e6 4.Nb5 ...
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:

Progressive variation! Nc3 instead of Nf6, 0-0 instead of e6, and Ne5 instead of Nf6. After ...Bd6 and ...0-0 with a

VIENNA GAME

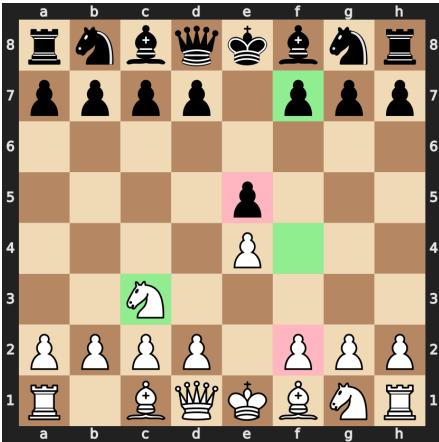
Level: Beginner

Champions: Spielmann, Mieses, Tchigorin

Vienna Game • 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3

■ 53%

■ 47%



MAIN IDEA

The aggressive alternative to 2.Nf3! With 2.Nc3, White prepares f2-f4 (the Vienna Gambit) or Bc4 followed by d3 and f4. It's a dangerous attacking weapon that avoids the solid lines of the Italian and Spanish. The key idea: quick development and attack on f7. The Vienna can lead to sharp tactical battles or quiet positional games depending on Black's response. A great surprise weapon!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing f4 without preparation: ...exf4 can be good for Black
- Forgetting to develop: Bc4, d3, Nf3 must come before the attack
- Being too slow: the Vienna is an attacking opening, play actively

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Being passive: ...Nf6, ...Bc5, ...d6 must fight for the center
- Ignoring the f4 threat: ...d5 or ...d6 and ...Be7 handle it well
- Taking on e4 too early: can give White a strong attack

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Knight c3:**
Supports e4 and prepares d5 - logical dev...
- Queen:**
Qh5 in certain lines threatens mate on f7

- Pawn f4:**
The Vienna Gambit! Opens the f-file and at...
- Knight g1:**
Nf3 or Nge2 depending on plan (f4 or not)

- Bishop f1:**
Bc4 targets f7 - combined with Qh5 it's dan...
- King:**
Kingside castle after Bc4/Be2 and Nf3

TRAPS TO KNOW



Frankenstein Trap

3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d3?!. ...Nxe4!
5.Nxe4 d5 wins a piece since the Bc4 and Ne4 are both hanging! AVOID (White): Play 4.d3 only after f3, or play 3.f4 directly.



Vienna Gambit

3.f4!?. exf4 and White sacrifices a pawn for open lines. If Black accepts, 4.Nf3 with compensation. AVOID (Black): Accept with ...exf4 but play solidly, or decline with ...d6.



Max Lange Attack

3.Bc4 and if ...Bc5?!. 4.Qg4!
Threatens g7 and f7. Black must defend precisely.
AVOID (Black): Play ...Nf6 first to control g4 and e4.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Vienna Gambit

2...Nf6 3.f4 d5 4.fxe5 Nxe4...
■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs:
A complex and tactical position.
Exploiting Bc4, Bf1 and attack
the Ne4-Nf6 to chase the
...Bc5 with active play.



Falkbeer Variation

2...Nf6 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Qh5 ...
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:
Applies pressure on f7 and
e5. Then ...Bf5, ...Qe6, ...Nf5 to
conclude attack.



Classical Variation

2...Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.Qg4 ...
■ 51% ■ 49%

Blancs:
A 2-3 tactical position! After
the 2...Nc6, aggressive pieces
but the king is exposed.
Develop and attack.

KING'S GAMBIT

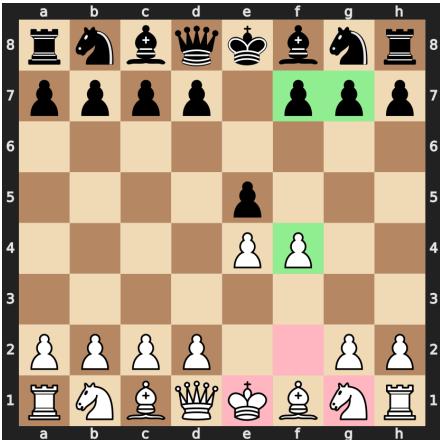
Level: Beginner

Champions: Spassky, Bronstein, Short

1.e4 e5 2.f4

■ 52%

■ 48%



MAIN IDEA

The most romantic opening in chess! White sacrifices the f2 pawn for rapid development and open lines against the Black King. The idea is simple: after 2...exf4, White plays Nf3 and Bc4, aiming at f7. Black can keep the pawn with ...g5 but the King becomes exposed. It's all-out attack vs solid defense. Fischer called it 'a decisive opening' - you either win or lose brilliantly!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing Bc4 without Nf3: allows ...Qh4+ with check
- Forgetting to castle: the King in the center is vulnerable
- Pushing too many pawns: development is the key, not pawn advances

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Keeping the f4 pawn at all costs: development matters more
- Playing ...g5 without preparation: h4 can become dangerous
- Forgetting to develop: ...d5 and piece development are urgent

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Knight g1:**
Nf3 is almost always the first move - defen...
- Queen:**
Can go to f3 (attacks f7) or h5 (pressure o...

- Bishop f1:**
Bc4 targets f7 directly - the Bc4+Qb3/Qf3 ...
- Knight b1:**
Nc3 then Nd5 - the Knight on d5 is a monster

- King:**
Sometimes 0-0 even while sacrificing mate...
- Rook h1:**
After fxe5 or if Black takes on g3, the Rook...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Muzio Gambit

After 3.Nf3 g5 4.Bc4 g4, White plays 5.0-0!! sacrificing the Knight! After gx fx3 6.Qxf3 the attack on f7 is irresistible. AVOID (Black): Don't play ...g4 - prefer ...Bg7 or ...d6.



Kieseritzky Trap

After 3.Nf3 g5 4.h4 g4 5.Ne5, if ...Nf6?? 6.Bc4! Threatens Nxf7 and Bxf7+. Double attack! AVOID (Black): Play ...d5! or ...Qe7 instead of ...Nf6 to block the diagonals.



Declined Trap

2...Bc5 (Declined) 3.Bc4!? Targets f7. If ...Nc6? 4.fxe5! Threatens Qh5 or Bxf7+. The Bc5 no longer defends anything! AVOID (Black): Play ...d6 or ...Nf6 to defend e5 before developing the Bishop.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Classical Gambit Accepted

2...exf4 3.Nf3 g5 4.h4 g4 5...

■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs:
Nf3 Ne5 attacks f7. After BxNe5, the f7 pawn is captured. If Black plays g4, the King is forced to f2. After Bxf7+, the King is forced Kf1 and the Bishop is exposed. Play ...d5! to open the game.



Cunningham Defense

2...exf4 3.Nf3 Be7 4.Bc4 B...

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:
The King goes to f1-f2. The Queen is forced to f3. The King is forced Kf1 and the Bishop is exposed. Play ...d5! to open the game.



Gambit Declined

2...Bc5 3.Nf3 d6 4.Nc3 Nf6

■ 51% ■ 49%

Blancs:
Bc5 refuses the gambit. Black structures with Bc5, Ne5, and Nc6. Play ...Bxf4 to 0-0, ...Nc6, ...Bg4 and look for

FOUR KNIGHTS GAME

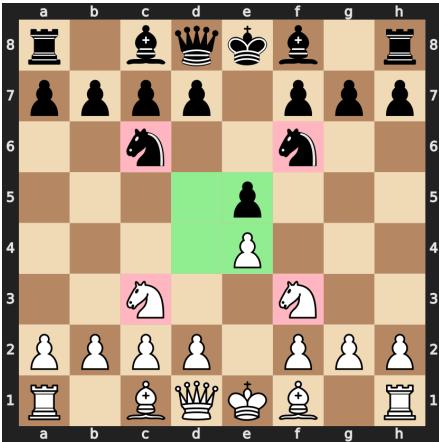
Level: Beginner

Champions: Svidler, Caruana, Rubinstein

Four Knights • 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6

■ 52%

■ 48%



MAIN IDEA

The most symmetrical opening after 1.e4! Both sides develop naturally with Nc3-Nf3 for White and ...Nc6-...Nf6 for Black. The position is balanced and solid. White can try to break the symmetry with Bb5 (Spanish Four Knights), Bc4 (Italian Four Knights), or d4 (Scotch Four Knights). It's the perfect opening for beginners and a safe choice for those who want solid positions!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Copying Black's moves too long: White must try to break the symmetry
- Playing Bc4 without care: can fall into the Rubinstein Trap (...Nd4!)
- Being too passive: White has the first move advantage, use it

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Copying White's moves forever: Black must also seek imbalance
- Playing ...Nd4 at the wrong time: can backfire
- Being afraid of Bb5: ...a6 and ...d6 handle it well

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Bishops:** Bb5 (Spanish style) or Bc4 (Italian style) fo...
- Rooks:** After castling, centralize on e1/d1 (White) ...

- Center:** d4 for White is thematic, ...d6 or ...d5 for Bl...
- Queen:** Stay back at the start - the Knights do the ...

- King:** Quick kingside castle on both sides - the p...
- Pawns:** Avoid premature pawn advances that creat...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Rubinstein Trap

4.Bc4 Nxe4?? looks like winning a pawn, but 5.Nxe4! d5 6.Bxd5! Qxd5 7.Nc3! and the Queen is attacked, White wins material. AVOID (Black): Never take e4! Play ...Bc5 or ...Nxe4 only after ...d5.



Halloween Trap

4.Nxe5!? Halloween Gambit - Knight sacrifice! If ...Nxe5 5.d4 White's center is monstrous. AVOID (Black): Accept with ...Nxe5 5.d4 Nc6! (not Ng6?) 6.d5 Bb4! with counterplay.



Symmetry Trap

4.Bb5 Bc5?! copies White but 5.Nxe5! Nxe5 6.d4 wins a piece! The Bc5 and Ne5 are both hanging. AVOID (Black): Play 4...Bb4! (pins the Nc3) or 4...Nd4 (attacks the Bb5).

MAIN VARIATIONS



Spanish Four Knights

4.Bb5 Bb4 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3
■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs: Well and symmetrical, White breaks symmetry with ...d6, Black tries to chase the exchange pieces and ...Nb5.



Italian Four Knights

4.Bc4 Bc5 5.d3 d6 6.0-0
■ 51% ■ 49%

Blancs: More Italian plans: Bc3, Qd6, a quiet look for attack with Nd4 to exchange



4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bb4 6.N...
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs: White has a strong center and the open files play. Pawns are weak. Play Bc3...d5 and quickly, the bishop pair

ALEKHINE DEFENSE

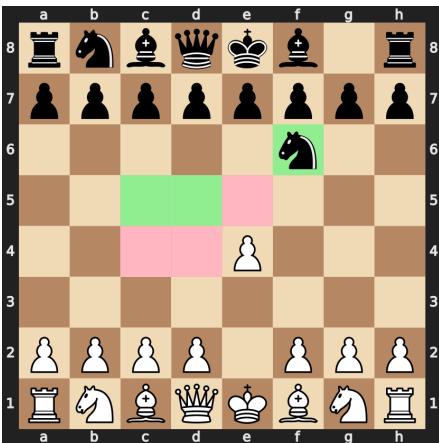
Level: Intermediate

Champions: Alekhine, Fischer, Carlsen

1.e4 Nf6

■ 55%

■ 45%



MAIN IDEA

The most provocative defense! Black attacks e4 immediately with the Knight and INVITES White to advance their pawns. After 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6, White has an imposing center but Black will attack it with ...c5, ...Nc6, ...e6. Alekhine's brilliant idea: advanced pawns become targets! This is an opening for brave players who love dynamic counterplay.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Pushing all pawns (e5, d4, c4, f4): the center becomes overstretched and Black attacks it
- Not playing c4 to chase the Nd5: the Knight stays centralized and bothers White
- Ignoring ...c5: this move undermines d4, you must defend the center or exchange

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Letting White's pawns settle without attacking them: ...c5 and ...d6 are urgent
- Retreating the Knight to f6 too early: exf6 gives White the open e-file
- Playing ...g6 without preparation: the fianchetto is slow, White's center can crush

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Nf6:**
Attacks e4, then retreats to d5 after e5 - th...
- Nb8:**
Nc6 puts pressure on d4 and e5 - reinforce...

- d6 pawn:**
Attacks e5 immediately - essential themati...
- Bc8:**
Come out to f5, g4 or e6 depending on stru...

- c5 pawn:**
Attacks d4 - the second key move to under...
- Bf8:**
e6 then Be7 (solid) or g6/Bg7 (fianchetto) i...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Chase Trap

After 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4, if Black plays ...d6 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4?! (too aggressive) ...dxe5 6.fxe5 6.fxe5 Nc6 7.Be3 Bf5! Black has excellent counterplay. AVOID (White): Play 5.Nf3 solidly instead of f4.



Four Pawns Trap

Four Pawns Variation: 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4 (4 pawns!) but after ...dxe5 6.fxe5 Nc6 7.Be3 Bf5! Black has excellent counterplay. AVOID (White): This variation is double-edged - prefer 5.exd6.



Knight Trap

After 4.Nf3 if Black plays ...Bg4?! 5.c4! Nb6 6.Be2 and the Knight must move again (Nc6 or Na6), losing time. AVOID (Black): Play ...dxe5 or ...g6 before ...Bg4.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Modern Variation

2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 dx...
■54% ■46%

Blancs:

The Nf5 is strong in the center and can be used to ...Bf5 or ...Be7, ...O-O with solid



Four Pawns Variation

2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6...
■52% ■48%

Blancs:

Massive but fragile center. Play ...Bf5 (Nc6) ...Bg4 then ...Bf5 or ...O-O to demolish e5.



Exchange Variation

2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6...
■54% ■46%

Blancs:

center position: White has pawns isolated, Nf5, Be2, pieces are active, ...Bf5 and seek

BUDAPEST GAMBIT

Level: Intermediate
Champions: Maroczy, Tartakower, Raport

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5

■ 54% ■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

The most aggressive response to 1.d4! After 2.c4 e5!? Black sacrifices a pawn for active piece play. After 3.dxe5 Ng4, the Knight attacks e5 and f2, creating immediate complications. White must be precise or get in trouble. It's a gambit that relies on activity and tactics rather than long-term compensation. Perfect for players who love surprises and complications!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Taking on e5 then playing passively: Black gets excellent compensation
- Advancing f3 to defend e5: weakens the King and opens the a7-g1 diagonal
- Keeping the pawn at all costs: development is more important

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Not following up on the gambit: the Knight on g4 must be active
- Exchanging pieces too early: Black needs pieces for the attack
- Forgetting development: ...Nc6, ...Bc5, ...d6 and ...0-0 must come quickly

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Knight f6:**
Goes to g4 to attack e5 and target f2 - the ...
- King:**
Quick kingside castle after ...Be7 or stay f1...

- Knight b8:**
Nc6 attacks e5 and develops quickly
- Queen:**
...Qe7 in certain lines to recover e5

- Bishop f8:**
Bc5 or Bb4+ depending on the line - active...
- Pawn d:**
...d6 to support e5 or ...d5 to open the game

TRAPS TO KNOW



Knight Trap

After 3...Ng4, if White plays 4.Bf4?? ...Nc6 5.Nf3 Bb4+! and after 6.Nbd2 Qe7 the e5 pawn falls with advantage.
AVOID (White): Play 4.Nf3 or 4.e4 to defend e5 correctly.



Fajarowicz Trap

3...Ne4?! (Fajarowicz) is risky. After 4.Nf3! Black has no clear compensation.
AVOID (Black): Prefer 3...Ng4 which is sounder.



Queen Trap

After 4.Nf3 Nc6, if 5.Bf4?? ...Bb4+! 6.Nbd2 Qe7 7.a3 Ngxe5! Black wins material.
AVOID (White): 5.e3 or 5.Nc3 are correct.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Adler Variation

3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.Bf...

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:
Reaches e5 and develops. After a3 recovers White's pawn. Then ...d6, ...0-0 with active



Rubinstein Variation

3.dxe5 Ng4 4.Bf4 Nc6 5.Nf...

■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs:
After 5.c3 White has the bishop pair. White's structure with c3-e4 has holes on d4



Alekhine Variation

3.dxe5 Ng4 4.e4 Nxe5 5.f4...

■ 55% ■ 45%

Blancs:
Massive e4-f4 center. White's center is imposing. However, White has recovered the pawn: ...Bb4; ...d6, ...0-0 and

DUTCH DEFENSE

Level: Intermediate

Champions: Nakamura, Short, Malaniuk

1.d4 f5

■ 54%

■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

The most aggressive reply to 1.d4! With ...f5, Black immediately fights for e4 and prepares a kingside attack. There are two main setups: the Stonewall (...d5, ...e6, ...c6, ...Bd6) with a solid pawn wall, or the Leningrad (...g6, ...Bg7, ...d6) with the fianchetto. Both lead to unbalanced, fighting positions. It's the opening for players who want to attack as Black!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Ignoring Black's kingside attack: ...g5, ...h5 can be dangerous
- Playing e4 without preparation: ...fxe4 can be good for Black
- Being too passive: White must use the center and the e5 square

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Weakening the King too much: f5 and g5 leave the King exposed
- Forgetting development: ...Nf6, ...Be7/...Bd6, ...0-0 are essential
- Playing ...e5 at the wrong time: can leave the f5 pawn weak

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Knight g8:**
Nf6 is essential - controls e4 and prepares ...
- King:**
Castle quickly! The h5-e8 diagonal is weak...

- Pawn e:**
e6 supports f5 and frees the Bf8 - Stonewall...
- Bishop c8:**
The Dutch problem! Comes out via d7-e8-...

- Bishop f8:**
Be7 (solid) or Bd6 (aggressive, targets h2) ...
- Pawn g:**
The ...g5-g4 push is the main attack plan - ...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Queen Trap

2.Qh5+?! looks strong but after ...g6 3.Qh4 (or Qh3) Black plays ...Nf6 and the Queen is misplaced. **AVOID** (Black): Don't panic! ...g6 then normal development.



Staunton Gambit

2.e4!? Staunton Gambit - pawn sacrifice to open lines. After ...fxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 White has activity. **AVOID** (Black): Accept with ...fxe4 then ...d5! to close the center.



Bishop Trap

In the Leningrad, if White plays h3? Black prepares ...g5-g4!, opening the g-file. **AVOID** (White): Play Qc2 or Bf4 instead to control e4 without weakening the kingside.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Stonewall

2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 d5 ...
■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs:
Black's center is solid but the pawn at e6 is weak. White can play Nc3, Ne5, Bf4, etc. Plan: ...Bd6, ...Qe7, ...Ne4,



Leningrad

2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 ...
■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs:
In the Leningrad, White plays Bg7 as a masterpiece: Nc3, Ne5 (loses the pawn), Nf6, etc. (loses the pawn). The plan: ...Bd6, ...Qe7, ...Ne4, etc.



Classical

2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e6 4.Nf3 Bg7 ...
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:
Classical development. The plan: ...Bd6, ...Qe7, ...Ne4, etc. The plan: ...Bd6, ...Qe7, ...Ne4, etc.

ENGLISH OPENING

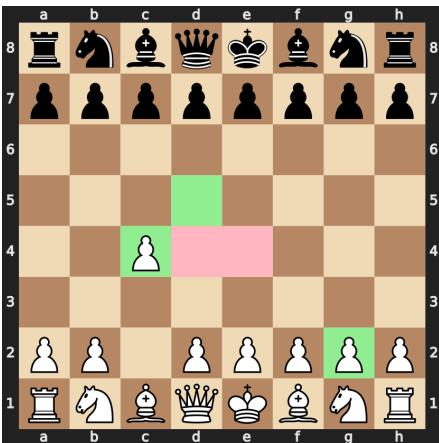
Level: Intermediate

Champions: Botvinnik, Kasparov, Kramnik

1.c4

■ 53%

■ 47%



MAIN IDEA

White controls d5 without playing e4! It's a flexible opening that can transpose into many systems (Queen's Gambit, Catalan, Reversed Sicilian positions). The main idea is to fianchetto the Bishop on g2 to control the long diagonal and the center from afar. White avoids the theoretical lines of 1.e4 and 1.d4 while keeping all options open. It's the opening for strategic players who want to impose their style.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing without a plan: you must choose between g3/Bg2 (fianchetto), Nc3/e3 (classical) or d4 (transposition)
- Pushing d4 too early without preparation: can allow Black to seize the initiative in the center
- Neglecting the center: the fianchetto alone is not enough, you must also prepare d4 or e4

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Playing ...e5 automatically: gives White a Reversed Sicilian with an extra tempo
- Being too passive: Black must fight for the center with ...d5 or ...e5
- Ignoring the Bg2: this Bishop controls the long diagonal a8-h1

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Pawn c4:** Controls d5 and prepares Nc3 - first step ...
- Pawn d:** d3 (solid) or d4 (central) according to the c...

- Bishop g2:** The Bg2 fianchetto is the main plan - the B...
- Pawn e:** e3 (solid) or e4 (aggressive) for a pawn ce...

- Knights:** Nc3 controls d5, Nf3 prepares classical de...
- King:** Kingside castle after g3/Bg2/Nf3 - safe pos...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Gambit Trap

1...e5 (Reversed Sicilian). If 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3?! e4! gains time. AVOID (White): Play 2.g3! first, or 3.d3 to control e4.



Symmetry Trap

1...c5 (Symmetrical). If White plays Nc3/Nf3/g3 without d4, Black equalizes easily. AVOID (White): Prepare d4 with Nf3, g3, Bg2 then d4 at the right moment.



Center Trap

1...e6 2.d4 d5 transposes into the Queen's Gambit! If Black is not prepared, they can suffer. AVOID (Black): Know the Queen's Gambit or play 1...c5/1...e5 to avoid it.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Reversed Sicilian

1...e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.g3 d5 4.... ■53% ■47%

Blancs:

White has a Sicilian with an extra tempo developed Nc3/Bg2, ...Bg7/...Bc8, ...0-0 and ...d5.



Symmetrical Defense

1...c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.... ■51% ■49%

Blancs:

Double fianchetto possible. But instead of ...Nf6/d5, play ...e5 or ...d5 for faster development.



Hedgehog System

1...Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.Nf3 b6 ... ■53% ■47%

Blancs:

The Hedgehog is solid but compact. Play Bg2, 0-0-0, ...d5, ...c5, ...Qc7+. Wait then

FRENCH DEFENSE

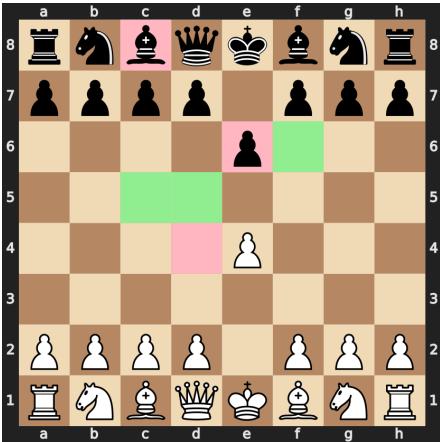
Level: Intermediate

Champions: Botvinnik, Petrosian, Morozevich

1.e4 e6

■ 53%

■ 47%



MAIN IDEA

Black prepares ...d5 to contest the center immediately. Unlike the Caro-Kann, the Bc8 is locked behind the e6 pawn - that's the price to pay! In exchange, Black gets a solid structure and a clear plan: attack the white pawn chain at its base (d4) with ...c5. The French creates unbalanced positions where both sides have clear plans - White attacks on the kingside, Black counter-attacks in the center and on the queenside.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Not choosing a system: you must decide between e5 (Advance), exd5 (Exchange) or Nc3/Nd2 (Tarrasch/Winawer)
- Ignoring ...c5: this move undermines d4, if you don't react the chain collapses
- Exchanging exd5 without reason: frees the Bc8 and gives Black easy play

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Forgetting to attack the chain: ...c5 is the thematic move, without it Black is passive
- Letting the Bc8 die: you must find a plan to activate it (...b6/...Ba6 or ...Qb6/...Bd7)
- Playing ...f6 at the wrong moment: this move weakens e6 and can be premature

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- d5 pawn:** Play ...d5 on move 2 - that's the whole point!

- Knights:** Nd7 supports ...c5 and can go to f6 or b6, ...

c5 pawn: The key move! Attacks the base of the d4 ...

Bf8: In Winawer ...Bb4 pins the Nc3, otherwise ...

Bc8: The French problem! Solutions: ...b6/...Ba6...

King: Often Kingside castle, but sometimes the K...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Advance Trap

After 3.e5, if Black plays ...c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6?!, 6.Bd3! (not a3?? Qxb2) White is well developed, AVOID (Black): Play ...Bd7 and ...Bb5 to exchange the bad Bishop, or ...Nh6-f7.



Winawer Trap

3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 and White has the bishop pair and aims for Qg4 attacking g7! AVOID (Black): Play ...Qc7! (defends g7) or ...Ne7 before ...Qa5.



Exchange Trap

3.exd5 exd5 seems boring but if Black is not careful: 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Bd6?! 6.Qh5! creates threats on h7 and d5. AVOID (Black): Play ...Nf6 quickly to control h5.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Advance Variation

2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5...

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs: Keep the e5-d4-c3 chain. Pressure Bc8 exd2+ and attack on the Kingside with Nh6-f7, ...Nh6-f7 and ...Bxf7. The Bc8



Winawer

2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5...

■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs: After 5.c3, damaged structures allow complicated pawn play. Plans: ...Ne7-f5 or



Tarrasch

2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nf...

■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs: Non Nd2 avoids the ...Bb4 pinning attack. Ne7-f5 and attack with Ne2-f4+. The Bishop comes out

SLAV DEFENSE

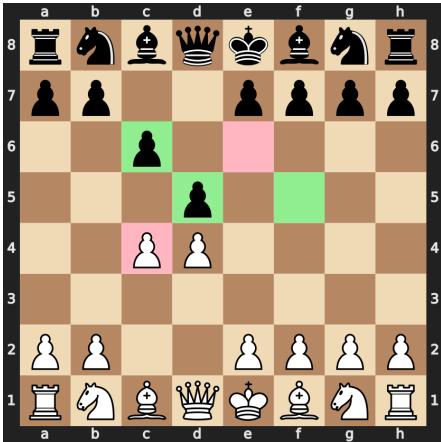
Level: Intermediate

Champions: Lasker, Euwe, Anand

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6

■ 53%

■ 47%



MAIN IDEA

The most solid reply to the Queen's Gambit! With ...c6, Black defends d5 while keeping the diagonal open for the Bc8 (unlike the QGD with ...e6). After ...Nf6, ...Bf5 develops the Bishop BEFORE ...e6. The Slav leads to solid, strategic positions where Black has no weaknesses. It's the favorite defense of Lasker, Euwe, and many modern grandmasters who want reliability!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Exchanging cxd5 too early: releases the tension and Black equalizes
- Ignoring the Bf5: this Bishop is Black's best piece, challenge it
- Playing passively: White must use the space advantage

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Playing ...e6 before ...Bf5: blocks the Bishop forever
- Taking on c4 without a plan: ...dxc4 should be prepared
- Being too passive: ...c5 or ...e5 must come to challenge White's center

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

Pawn c6:

Supports d5 and prepares ...Bf5 - play BE...

Knight b8:

Nbd7 (flexible, supports Nf6) is often better...

Bishop c8:

THE key piece! Develop to f5 (classical) or...

Pawn e5:

...e6 after the Bishop comes out - otherwis...

Knight g8:

Nf6 attacks e4 and develops - natural move

King:

Classical kingside castle after ...Be7 or ...Bd6

TRAPS TO KNOW



Bishop Trap

After 3.Nc3 (or 3.Nf3) Black MUST play ...Nf6 then ...Bf5 (or ...dxc4 then ...Bf5). If ...e6 first, the Bc8 is locked in forever! AVOID (Black): Always develop the Bishop before ...e6.



Slav Gambit

After ...dxc4 ...Bf5, Black tries to keep the pawn. If 5.e4?? Bxe4! wins a pawn. White must play 5.a4 to prevent ...b5. AVOID (White): Don't play e4 too fast! a4 first.



Meran Trap

If Black plays ...e6 without having brought out the Bishop, it's the Semi-Slav. The Bc8 is locked in but Black prepares ...dxc4, ...b5 (Meran). AVOID (Black): Either pure Slav (...Bf5), or accept Semi-Slav but know the plans.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Pure Slav (Bf5)

3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 Bf5 5.cxd...

■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs:

...Bf5 attacks b7 and d5. After the Bf5 is active, White has a slight positional advantage



Semi-Slav (e6)

3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.e3 N...

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:

The Bc8 is locked in. Play 0.Bf5 (Meran) to free the Bishop. Or play ...Bd6 and



Slav Accepted

3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.a4...

■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs:

No pawns out. Recover the pawn via Bxg6 and the development with 0.Bf5

BENKO GAMBIT

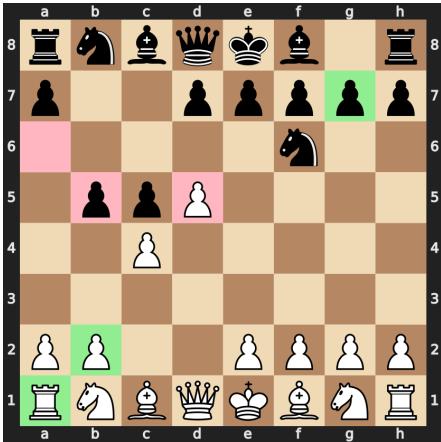
Level: Intermediate

Champions: Benko, Topalov, Ivanchuk

Volga Gambit • 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5

■ 52%

■ 48%



MAIN IDEA

The quintessential positional gambit! Black sacrifices a pawn (sometimes two with ...a6) to get lasting pressure on the open a and b files. This is not a gambit to mate, but to create long-term pressure. The fianchettoed Bg7 and Rooks on a8-b8 target the a2 and b2 pawns. Even in the endgame, the pressure continues! It's a gambit that White hates because it's hard to refute and boring to defend.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Keeping the b5 pawn at all costs: this costs time and Black gets their pressure
- Playing passively: White must counter-attack in the center or kingside, not defend
- Neglecting development: if White plays a4, Ra3 etc. to defend, they fall behind

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Not following up on the gambit: ...Bxa6, ...d6, ...g6/...Bg7 and Rooks on a-b files quickly
- Attacking too slowly: the pressure must be constant, don't let White consolidate
- Forgetting the center: the d6-e6 pawns must support the queenside attack

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- **Pawn b5:**
The sacrifice! After cxb5 a6 bxa6, the a an...
- **Knight b8:**
Nbd7 then Nb6 - the Knight targets c4 or a...

- **Pawn g6 + Bishop:**
g6 then Bg7 - the Bishop targets a1 and th...

- **King:**
Kingside castle after ...Bg7 - safe position ...

- **Rooks:**
Ra8 and Rb8 (or Rfb8 after castling) - pres...
- **Queen:**
Qa5 or Qb6 to reinforce queenside pressure

TRAPS TO KNOW



Full Gambit Trap

After 4.cxb5 a6! (second sacrifice) 5.bxa6 Bxa6 and Black has two open files for the price of two pawns.
AVOID (White): Accept but counter-attack quickly in the center with e4, Nc3, Nf3.



Diagonal Trap

The Ba6 targets f1, preventing natural development! If White plays e4?? the Bishop takes f1.
AVOID (White): Play Nf3, e3 (not e4), then develop the Bishop to e2 or b5.



Rook Trap

Typical position. Black Rooks go to a8 and b8, the Qb6 targets b2. If White is passive, the pressure becomes unbearable.
AVOID (White): Play actively! e4, Re1, Bf4 and counter-attack.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Gambit Accepted

4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 Bxa6 6....
■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs:
Counter-attack! e4 (takes square), Nf3 (targets b2), Ne5?!, then e1! (breaks active ...Qa5), then ...Rb8 and

Gambit Declined (b6)

4.Nf3 g6 5.b6
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:
Retiring the advanced pawn 070066 enjoys Black. Develop Nc3?!, Bc2, Qa0 with space ...Bg7...0-0...Na6-c7xb6.



Fianchetto Variation

4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 g6 6.Nc3...
■ 51% ■ 49%

Blancs:
Double fianchetto! The Bg2 controls important squares. Nc3 is important! Ne5?!, then ...Qa5 and the usual

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

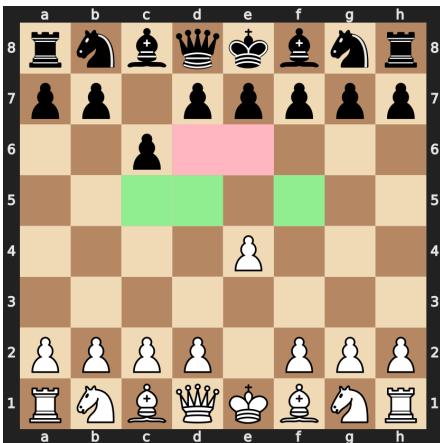
Level: Intermediate

Champions: Karpov, Capablanca, Anand

1.e4 c6

■ 52%

■ 48%



MAIN IDEA

Black prepares ...d5 with the support of the c6 pawn. Unlike the French (1...e6), the Bc8 is not locked in and can come out actively to f5 or g4. The structure is solid and symmetrical. Black accepts less space at the start to get a position without weaknesses. This is the ideal opening for positional players who like clear and solid positions.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Exchanging exd5 cxd5 too early: gives Black a comfortable position without compensation
- Ignoring the ...c5 push: this move attacks White's center and frees Black's game
- Overestimating the space advantage: Black's position is solid and hard to break through

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Playing ...dxe4 then ...Bf5 automatically: sometimes ...Bg4 or ...Nf6 first is better
- Forgetting to play ...e6 at the right time: the Bc8 can remain locked in if you wait too long
- Being too passive: Black must seek ...c5 to free their position and create counterplay

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- d5 pawn:** Play ...d5 immediately on move 2 - that's ...
- Bf8:** Develop to e7 (solid) or d6 (more active) d...

• **Bc8:** Develop BEFORE ...e6! Go to f5 (classical...) or g4 (modern)

• **King:** Classical kingside castle once the minor pi...

• **Knights:** Typical setup: ...Nd7 first, then ...Nf6 - file f...

• **c6 pawn:** Can advance to ...c5 later to attack White's...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Advance Trap

Advance Variation: 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nc3 e6 5.g4 Bg6 6.Nge2?? Qb6! attacks undefended b2. AVOID (White): Play 6.Nf3 or defend b2 with Rb1 before Ne2.



Tai Trap

After 4...Nf6?? 5.Nxf6+ exf6 (or gxf6) 6.Bc4! threatens Qb3 attacking b7 and f7. AVOID: Don't recapture on f6! Play 4...Bf5 or 4...Nd7 first.



Fantasy Trap

3.f3!? prepares e4-e5 with space gain. If Black ignores, e5 gives a powerful center. AVOID: Play ...e6 or ...dxe4 ...e5! to break the center.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Classical Variation

2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 ...
■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs: Both Nf3, h4 to attack the Bg6. But no exchange on Be7, ...O-O then seek ...c5 to free.



Advance Variation

2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nf3 e6 ...
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs: Keep the e5-d4 pawn chain! Attack the base pawns with 0-0-0 and castling. Then ...Qb6 put pressure on d4.



Panov Variation

2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 ...
■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs: Create an isolated black pawn. It is isolated but trying to active squares (c4, e4). Develop quickly and

PETROV DEFENSE

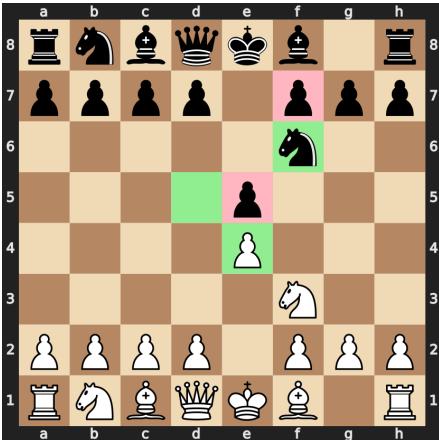
Level: Intermediate

Champions: Kramnik, Caruana, Karjakin

Russian Defense • 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6

■ 52%

■ 48%



MAIN IDEA

The most solid response to 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3! Instead of defending e5 with ...Nc6, Black counter-attacks the e4 pawn with ...Nf6. After 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4, the position is symmetrical and solid. Black's plan is simple: equalize with solid play and wait for White's mistakes. It's the favorite defense of World Champions who want a safe draw as Black!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing 3.Nxe5 Nxe4?? 4.Qe2!: wins a piece (this is actually good for White!)
- Trading too many pieces: helps Black equalize
- Being too aggressive: the Petrov is solid, forcing leads nowhere

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Playing 3.Nxe5 Nxe4?? without ...d6 first: loses a piece to Qe2
- Being too passive: Black must at least equalize
- Forgetting ...d5: this move frees Black's position

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Pawn d6:** MANDATORY after 3.Nxe5! Chases the King
- Bishop c8:** Develop to f5 or g4 (pins Nf3) - don't leave ...

- Knight f6:** Recaptures e4 after ...d6 Nf3, then retreats...
- Knight b8:** Go to d7 (supports the center) or c6 (after)

- Bishop f8:** Develop to d6 (active) or e7 (solid) - contro...
- King:** Classical kingside castle after ...Be7 - very ...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Beginner's Trap

3.Nxe5 Nxe4?? (mistake!) 4.Qe2! and the Ne4 is pinned. If 4...Nf6 5.Nc6+ wins the Queen! AVOID (Black): Always play 3...d6! first to chase the Ne5.



Stafford Trap

3...d6 4.Nxf7?! (dubious gambit) Kxf7 5.Bc4+ White has threats but Black is better after 5...Be6! AVOID (White): Don't play Nxf7 - retreat Nf3 is correct.



Cochrane Trap

Cochrane Gambit: 4.Nxf7?! Kxf7 5.d4 - real sacrifice for the attack. If Black accepts poorly, the attack is strong. AVOID (Black): 5...c5! or 5...Be6 with active defense and extra material.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Classical Variation

3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.d...

■ 51% ■ 49%

Blancs: Symmetrical position. Play 0...Bc4 to ready Nc6 or f5 and 1...Nc6 with pressure on ...Nf7. Maintain symmetry



Steinitz Variation

3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.Nc3

■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs: Attack the Ne4 immediately! Defend the knight. White has options if Nxe4: play 6.Nc5 or 6.Nf3. 6.Nc5 is a solid variation. 6.Nf3 is a more dynamic variation.



Three Knights Attack

3.Nc3 Nc6 4.Bb5

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs: Note: the classical Petrov (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6) is a variation of the Three Knights Attack. You can play 1...Nc6 or 1...Nf6. 2.Nf3 is a solid variation. 2.Nc3 is a more dynamic variation.

CATALAN OPENING

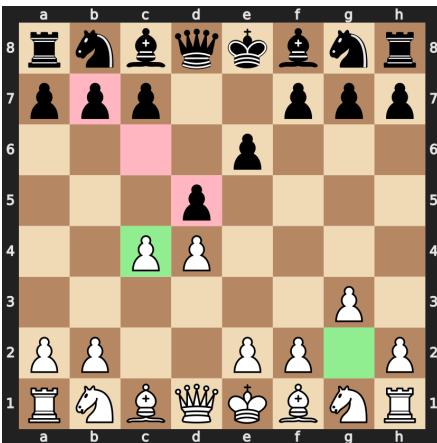
Level: Advanced

Champions: Kramnik, Giri, Ding Liren

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3

■ 56%

■ 44%



MAIN IDEA

The King's Indian reversed for White! After 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 and Bg2, White combines the control of d4 with the pressure of the fianchettoed Bishop on the long diagonal. The Bg2 targets b7 and the a8 Rook. If Black takes on c4, White recovers with perfect development. It's a strategic opening that leads to lasting positional pressure. The Catalan has no refutation!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Recovering the c4 pawn too quickly: sometimes it's better to develop first
- Neglecting the Bg2: this Bishop must stay active on the long diagonal
- Playing e4 prematurely: can weaken d4 if Black has played ...c5

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Taking on c4 without a plan: White recovers with excellent development
- Leaving the b7 pawn undefended: the Bg2 and Qc2 target it
- Playing ...c5 without preparation: can open the position in White's favor

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Pawn g3 + Bishop:** g3 then Bg2 - the Bishop dominates the long diagonal
- Queen:** Qc2 is thematic - targets c4 if taken, controls d4

- Knight g1:** Nf3 classical - controls e5 and d4, natural development
- Knight b1:** Nbd2 or Nc3 depending on whether c4 is taken

- King:** 0-0 quickly - the King is very safe with the f-pawn
- Rooks:** Rd1 (pressure on d-file) and Rac1 (pressure on c-file)

TRAPS TO KNOW

c4 Pawn Trap

After 3...Nf6 4.Bg2 dxc4, Black takes the pawn. White does NOT play 5.Qa4+ but 5.Nf3! then 0-0, Qc2 with lasting pressure. AVOID (Black): Either return the pawn with ...c5, or defend with ...a6, ...b5 but beware of Bg2!

Diagonal Trap

After ...c5 (good move) if ...Nc6?! 6.cxd5 exd5 7.0-0 Be7 8.dxc5! and the d5 pawn is weak, the Bg2 targets it. AVOID (Black): Play ...cxd4 or ...Nbd7 instead of ...Nc6 directly.

Open Trap

Open Catalan: 5.cxd5 if ...exd5?! the Bg2 targets d5 directly. White plays Qc2, Nc3 and the d5 pawn is under constant pressure. AVOID (Black): Recapture ...Nxd5! (not exd5) to keep flexibility.

MAIN VARIATIONS

Open Catalan

3...Nf6 4.Bg2 dxc4 5.Nf3 B...

Blancs:

Long-term pressure: Qc2, a6, targets f1, a4. Better return, then Rf1, Nc3, Nf3, ...Bd7,

Closed Catalan

3...Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-...

Blancs:

Black keeps d5 closed. Play Qc2, Rf1, Nc3 captures both pawns, then exd5 to open the diagonal. Look for ...dxec4

Defense with ...c5

3...Nf6 4.Bg2 c5 5.Nf3 cxd...

Blancs:

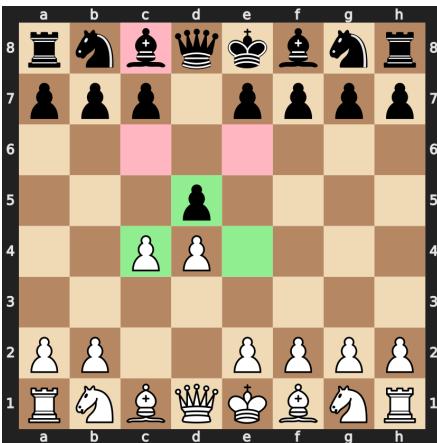
The Nd4 is well placed. After center recapture, the Bg2 targets the center. Play 0-0, Nc3, fewer targets. Play ...dxec4,

QUEEN'S GAMBIT

Level: Intermediate-Advanced
Champions: Carlsen, Kramnik, Botvinnik

1.d4 d5 2.c4

■ 56% ■ 44%



MAIN IDEA

The 'gambit' is a false sacrifice: if Black takes 2...dxc4, White easily recovers the pawn with e3 then Bxc4. The idea is to attack Black's center with c4. If Black defends with ...e6 (Declined), their Bc8 remains locked in. If ...c6 (Slav), they keep the possibility of bringing out the Bishop. This is the quintessential strategic opening, played at the highest level for over a century.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing e4 too early without preparation: the center collapses if Black is well developed
- Premature cxd5: frees Black and gives them easy play with ...exd5 or ...cxd5
- Neglecting the Nb1: this Knight must go to c3 to support e4 and control d5

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Keeping the c4 pawn after ...dxc4: costs too much time and White recovers with advantage
- ...Bf5 before ...e6 in the Declined: the Bishop can be attacked by Qb3 or cxd5 followed by Qb3
- ...c5 without preparation: opens the position when Black is behind in development

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Knights:**
Nf3 and Nc3 are the natural moves - contr...
- King:**
Classical kingside castle after e3 and Bd3/...

- Bc1:**
Bf4 (London System), Bg5 (pins Nf6) or e3...
- Queen:**
Stay flexible - avoid premature sorties, ofte...

- Bf1:**
After e3, develop to d3 (controls e4) or tak...
- Rooks:**
Rc1 for the semi-open c-file, Rd1 to suppor...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Elephant Trap

2...e5?? 3.dxe5 d4 (hoping to recover) 4.e3! dx3 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 6.fxe3 and White has an extra pawn in the endgame. AVOID (Black): Never play ...e5 on move 2! It's a blunder.



Accepted Trap

After 2...dxc4 3.Nf3 b5?? (wanting to keep the pawn) 4.a4! a6 5.axb5 axb5 6.Rxa8 and White wins the Rook! AVOID (Black): Don't play ...b5 - return the pawn with ...e6 and ...c5.



Cambridge Springs

5...Nbd7 6.Bg5 Qa5! pins the Nc3 and threatens ...Ne4 or ...Bb4. The Bg5 is attacked by ...h6 and ...Ne4. AVOID (White): Play Nd2 instead of Nf3, or Bd2 to defend c3.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Queen's Gambit Declined

2...e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be...

■ 56% ■ 44%

Blancs:
Note Bg5 pins the Nf6, defending e5. Since Nc3 is pinned, the Bc8 with ...dxc4 then...



Queen's Gambit Accepted

2...dxc4 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 ...

■ 55% ■ 45%

Blancs:
Recover the pawn and fully develop quickly. After the e6, play ...c5 to prepare a attack in the center. Rapid development



Slav Defense

2...c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4
■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs:

Break over the pawn with a4 BEFORE he castles. If he is Bf5 (classical Slav) then ...e6.

BENONI DEFENSE

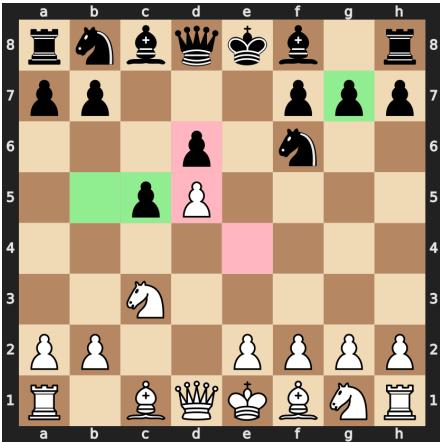
Level: Advanced

Champions: Tal, Topalov, Vugar Gashimov

Modern Benoni • 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5...

■ 55%

■ 45%



MAIN IDEA

The Benoni creates maximum imbalance! Black accepts a backward pawn on d6 and a hole on d5 to get a queenside pawn majority (a7, b7, c5 against a2, b2) and dynamic counterplay. Black's plan is simple: ...b5, ...Nb6-c4 or ...a6/...b5/...b4 to create a passed pawn. Meanwhile, White attacks the kingside with e4-e5 or Bf4/Bg5. It's a race between the two attacks!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing passively: White has e4-d5 but must use this space to attack
- Ignoring ...b5: this push creates a passed pawn, you must play a4 to prevent it
- Exchanging on d6 without reason: the d6 pawn is weak, dxd6 frees it!

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Playing ...b5 without preparation: a4 can stop it, prepare with ...a6 first
- Forgetting the kingside: ...h6 and ...Kh7 can be useful against the white attack
- Exchanging pieces: Black needs pieces for the attack, avoid unnecessary exchanges

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Pawn d6:** Backward pawn but essential - it controls e...
- Pawn a6 + b5:** THE plan! ...a6 then ...b5 creates the majo...

- Bishop g7:** Mandatory fianchetto - the Bg7 attacks d5 ...
- King:** Quick kingside castle - the King must be s...

- Knight b8:** ...Nbd7 or ...Na6-c7 to prepare ...b5 or ...N...
- Rook a8:** ...Ra8-b8 supports ...b5, or ...Qa5 with pre...

TRAPS TO KNOW

d5 Pawn Trap

After 4.Nc3, Black MUST play ...exd5! If ...d6?! first, White keeps more space. AVOID (Black): Always take ...exd5 to open the diagonal for the Bf8.

Knight Trap

If Black plays ...Bg4?! too early, White has h3! Bxf3 Qxf3 with an active Queen and d6 is weak. AVOID (Black): Develop ...g6/...Bg7 first, ...Bg4 only if useful.

Kingside Trap

Typical position. White prepares e5 or Bf4-e5. If Black is passive, e5! dx5 d6! creates a devastating passed pawn. AVOID (Black): Play ...a6, ...b5 FAST to create counterplay!

MAIN VARIATIONS

Classical Benoni

6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Be2 0...
■ 55% ■ 45%

Blancs:
a7 (prevents ...b5), Bf4 or Bg5, Ne5 or f4 for the attack, ...Bxa1, ...Ne5-c7 supports

Taimanov Variation

6.e4 g6 7.f4 Bg7 8.Bb5+ N...
■ 56% ■ 44%

Blancs:
Nf6 shades e5 and blocks the f5 square, and looks forward with a attack and a blockade ...b5 despite a4! ...f5

Fianchetto System

6.Nf3 g6 7.g3 Bg7 8.Bg2 0...
■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:
Double fianchetto possible with Nb9/Bb7/Bc5, e5 and aggressive Rb7-solid, Ne2, normal counterplay: ...Re8,

RUY LOPEZ

Level: Advanced

Champions: Capablanca, Fischer, Carlsen

Spanish Game • 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

■ 55%

■ 45%



MAIN IDEA

The Bb5 puts pressure on the Nc6 which defends the e5 pawn. White is not looking to win e5 immediately ($Bxc6 dxc6 Nxe5?$ allows ...Qd4! recovering the pawn), but creates lasting tension. The goal is to build slowly with c3-d4 to dominate the center. This is the most analyzed opening in chess history.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- $Bxc6$ too early: gives the bishop pair to Black without compensation
- d4 without c3: after ...exd4, White loses time recovering
- Neglecting castling: the King in the center becomes a target

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Premature ...Nxe4?: falls into the Mortimer or Berlin trap
- ...f6?: terribly weakens the h5-e8 diagonal, invites Qh5+
- ...a6 Ba4 b5 Bb3 Na5?: the Knight on the edge of the board is misplaced

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- **Bc1:** Develop to e3 (solid) or g5 (aggressive on f6)
- **King:** Castle quickly on the kingside, it's a priority

- **Nb1:** Go to c3 (classical) or d2 (Breyer) to support ...Nxe4
- **Queen:** Stay flexible - often e2 to connect the Rooks

- **Rooks:** Centralize on e1 (pressure on e-file) and d1
- **Pawns:** Prepare c3 then d4 for an ideal pawn center

TRAPS TO KNOW



Mortimer Trap

After 4.Nc3 Nd4?? 5.Nxe5! wins a pawn because the Nd4 falls afterwards. AVOID: Never play ...Nd4 so early! Develop normally with ...Nf6, ...Be7, ...O-O.



Noah's Ark Trap

After ...a6 Ba4 b5 Bb3, Black plays ...c5-c4 trapping the Bishop! AVOID (White): Retreat to Bc2 in time, or play a4 to break the pawn chain.



Tarrasch Trap

After 5.Bxc6 dxc6 6.Nxe5?? 6...Qd4! attacks e5 AND e4 - Black recovers with advantage. AVOID (White): Don't take e5! Play 0-0 or d3 instead.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Morphy Defense

3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7... ■55% ■45%

Blancs: Develop c3 then d4 to open the center for a counter-attack. The center with ...d5 at the right



Berlin Defense

3...Nf6 4.0-0 Nxe4 5.d4 Nd5... ■52% ■48%

Blancs: Technical endgame! Exploit the passed pawn majority and Black's doubled pawns. Activate the King.



Marshall Gambit

3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7... ■50% ■50%

Blancs: Accepts the gambit with 9.Qd5! Nxd4 Black has 10...Qd5 11.Qxe5! defend pressurizing

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

Level: Advanced

Champions: Kasparov, Fischer, Nakamura

King's Indian Defense • 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6

■ 54%

■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

The most combative defense against 1.d4! Black lets White build a massive e4-d4 center, then launches a furious kingside attack with ...e5, ...f5, ...Nf6-d7-f6, ...g5, ...Rf7-g7 and ...h5. It's a real battle: White attacks on the queenside (c5, b4) while Black attacks the White King. Kasparov and Fischer won immortal games with this opening. Very theoretical but spectacular!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Ignoring Black's kingside attack: the ...f5, ...g5, ...h5 attack can be devastating
- Playing too slowly on the queenside: the race is on, you must push c5, b4, a4 quickly
- Exchanging the Bg7 without reason: this Bishop is Black's strength but also a King defender

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Never playing ...f5: without this push the attack doesn't exist, Black gets crushed
- Playing ...e5 then ...exd4: opens the center for White, you must keep the tension
- Forgetting defense: attacking is good, but the Black King must also be protected!

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- **d6 + e5 pawns:** d6 first (solid), then ...e5 to block the center...
- **Nb8:** ...Nbd7 (supports e5) or ...Na6-c5 (attacks ...

- **Bg7:** The monster of the King's Indian! Targets ...
- **King:** Kingside castle, then the King stays on g8 ...

- **Nf6:** Attacks e4, then often ...Nfd7 to prepare
- **Rf8:** After ...f5, the Rook goes to f7, then g7 or ...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Center Trap

Classical position. If Black plays ...e5 too early without preparation, 6.dxe5 dxe5 7.Qxd8 Rxd8 8.Nxe5! wins a pawn. AVOID (Black): Play ...e5 only after 0-0, or play ...Nbd7 first.



Four Pawns Attack

5.f4!? Aggressive attack. The 4 pawns e4-d4-c4-f4 are imposing but Black plays ...c5! to counter-attack. AVOID (Black): Don't be passive! ...c5 immediately to open the game.



Bayonet Attack Trap

Bayonet Attack: White plays b4 to attack. Black must respond quickly with ...f5 or ...a5. AVOID (Black): Don't play passively! ...f5 or ...a5 to create counterplay.

MAIN VARIATIONS

Classical Variation

5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 e5 7.0-0 N...

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs: Classical center; Queenside attack with ...f5, ...h5, ...Rf7, ...Rb1. The King goes to g9, ...Rf5-h4 to open

A chessboard diagram showing the start of the Classical Variation of the King's Indian Defense.

Sämisch Variation

5.f3 0-0 6.Be3 e5 7.d5 c6

■ 55% ■ 45%

Blancs: Sämisch structure with f3. Queen's side attack with ...f5, ...h5, ...Rf7, ...Rb1. The King goes to g9, ...Rf5-h4 or preparation: ...Nf5 to

A chessboard diagram showing the start of the Sämisch Variation of the King's Indian Defense.

Four Pawns Attack

5.f4 0-0 6.Nf3 c5 7.d5 e6 8...

■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs: Imposing but fragile center. Queen's side attack with ...f5, ...h5, ...Rf7, ...Rb1. The King goes to g9, ...Rf5-h4 or ...Bg4, ...Rf6, ...Qa5 with

A chessboard diagram showing the start of the Four Pawns Attack variation of the King's Indian Defense.

GRÜNFELD DEFENSE

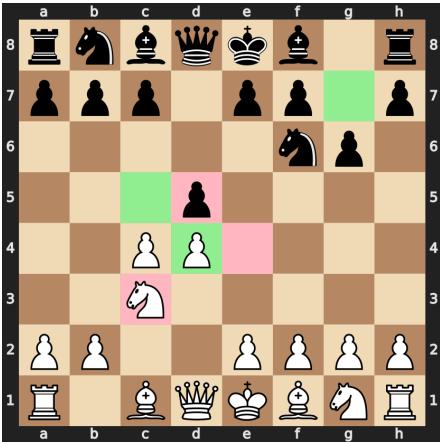
Level: Advanced

Champions: Kasparov, Svidler, Grischuk

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5

■ 54%

■ 46%



MAIN IDEA

The ultimate hypermodern defense! Black lets White build an ideal pawn center with d4+e4+c4, then attacks it with pieces (...Bg7) and pawns (...c5, ...d5). The idea: the center is a target, not a strength! After ...d5 cxd5 Nxd5, Black trades the d-pawn for pressure against d4. Kasparov used it to become World Champion. Extremely theoretical but powerful!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Overprotecting the center: the pawns become passive
- Exchanging the dark-squared Bishop: it defends d4
- Ignoring ...c5: this move attacks d4 directly

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Not playing ...c5: this is the key move to attack d4
- Exchanging the Bg7: this Bishop is the soul of the defense
- Being too passive: Black must attack the center actively

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- **Pawn d5:**
Strikes the center immediately - it's the diff...
- **Pawn c5:**
THE thematic move! Attacks d4 and opens...

- **Pawn g6 + Bishop:**
g6 then Bg7 - the Bishop is a monster that ...
- **Knight b8:**
Nc6 puts pressure on d4 - natural develop...

- **Knight d5:**
After cxd5 Nxd5, the Knight goes to c3 (Ex...)
- **King:**
Kingside castle after ...Bg7 - the King is we...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Center Trap

After 3...d5, if White plays 4.Nf3?! (instead of cxd5) ...dxc4! and Black keeps the pawn or gets good play. AVOID (White): Play 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 for the classical center.



Exchange Trap

After 5.e4 if Black plays ...Nb6?!, instead of Nxc3) 6.Bc3! and the Nb6 is misplaced, blocking the c-pawn. AVOID (Black): Play 5...Nxc3 6.bxc3 then ...Bg7 and ...c5.



Russian Trap

Russian Variation: White plays d5 to close the Bg7's diagonal. But ...c6! opens everything and the Bishop becomes a monster again. AVOID (White): Only close with d5 if well prepared, otherwise the pawn becomes weak.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Exchange Variation

4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.... ■54% ■46%

Blancs:
Surprise e4-d4 center but doubled pawns and Bg7 dominates. ...Nc6, ...



Russian Variation

4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.... ■55% ■45%

Blancs:
Aggressive system! Qd2 prepares to exchange the Bg7 and Rf7. With no side pawns pressure. ...Nc6, ...Rd8



Modern Variation

4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.... ■54% ■46%

Blancs:
Bd4 targets f7 and d5. Ne2 avoids Nd4. Bg5 pin Bh4. Be3 (Nf3) or ...Na5 to chase

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE

Level: Advanced

Champions: Nimzowitsch, Karpov, Kramnik

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4

■ 53%

■ 47%



MAIN IDEA

The most respected defense against 1.d4! With 3...Bb4, Black pins the Nc3 which defends e4. If White wants to play e4, they will have to accept doubled pawns after ...Bxc3. Nimzowitsch's idea was revolutionary: positional control takes precedence over occupying the center. Black gets a healthy structure and harmonious play. It's the favorite opening of positional world champions!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing e4 without accepting the consequences: after ...Bxc3+ bxc3, the doubled pawns are a weakness
- Ignoring the pin: the Nc3 is paralyzed, you must play Qc2, Bd2 or a3 to solve the problem
- Developing passively: White has space, they must use it actively

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Exchanging ...Bxc3 without reason: the Bishop is a good piece, exchanging it must have a purpose
- Playing ...d5 too early: blocks the Bc8, prefer ...d6 or ...b6 first
- Neglecting the center: ...c5 or ...d5 must come to contest d4

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Bb4:** Pins the Nc3 - that's the whole idea of the ...
- Bc8:** Comes out to b7 (after ...b6) or stays for

- d-pawn:** ...d6 (flexible) or ...d5 (central) depending ...
- Nb8:** ...Nc6 or ...Nbd7 depending on the chosen ...

- c5 pawn:** Attacks d4 - thematic move in many lines
- King:** Classical kingside castle after ...Be7 or ...Bd6

TRAPS TO KNOW



Doubled Pawn Trap

If White plays 4.e4?! ...Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 d5! attacks the center and the c3-c4 pawns are doubled. AVOID (White): Play 4.Qc2, 4.e3 or 4.Nf3 before e4.



Sämisch Variation

4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 - White accepts doubled pawns for the bishop pair and e4. Double-edged position! AVOID (Black): Play ...c5 and ...d5 to attack the fragile center.



Rubinstein Trap

4.e3 is solid. If Black plays ...c5? too fast, 5.Ne2! and the pin is lifted, White prepares a3. AVOID (Black): Play ...0-0 first, then ...d5 or ...c5 depending on the response.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Rubinstein Variation

4.e3 0-0 5.Bd3 d5 6.Nf3 c5... ■53% ■47%

Blancs:
Classical position, cxd5-exd5 creates the naked pawn. a3 forces the Bishop exchange: ...Bxc3 depending on timing.



Classical Variation (Qc2)

4.Qc2 0-0 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.Q... ■54% ■46%

Blancs:
Qc2 defends e4 and avoids doubled pawns after Bxc3. Qc2 develops the Bishop, e4 and g2; ...c5 or ...d5 for ...



Sämisch Variation

4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 c5 6.e3... ■54% ■46%

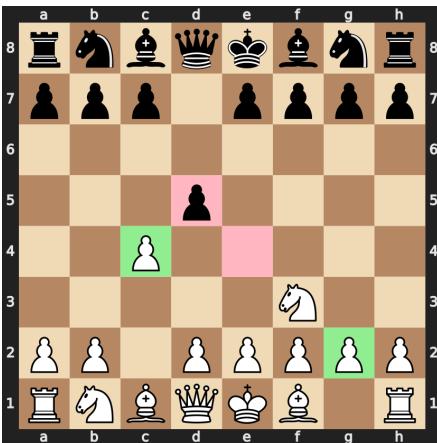
Blancs:
The doubled pawns give e4! Play 0-0-0, Ne2, cxd5, then e4, the Bishop pair and ...Na5 or ...Qa5 to target the

RÉTI OPENING

Level: Advanced
Champions: Réti, Kramnik, Aronian

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4

■ 53% ■ 47%



MAIN IDEA

The most flexible opening! With 1.Nf3 and 2.g3 or 2.c4, White delays committing to a pawn structure. The Réti can transpose into the English, Catalan, King's Indian Attack, or stay independent. The fianchettoed Bg2 controls the long diagonal. White's plan: develop harmoniously, then decide on d4 or e4 based on Black's setup. Perfect for players who like to outplay opponents positionally!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing without a clear plan: flexibility is good but you need a goal
- Pushing d4 and c4 too early: can transpose into uncomfortable lines
- Neglecting the center: at some point d4 or e4 must come

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Being too passive: ...d5 and ...c5 must fight for the center
- Ignoring the Bg2: this Bishop controls the long diagonal
- Copying White's setup: Black must find independent play

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Knight f3:**
Always first - controls e5 and d4, flexible
- Pawn d:**
d3 (solid) or d4 (transpose) depending on ...

- Pawn c4:**
Attacks d5 - it's the heart of the Réti
- Knight b1:**
Nc3 or Nbd2 depending on chosen structure

- Pawn g3 + Bishop:**
g3 then Bg2 - the fianchetto controls the lo...
- King:**
Kingside castle after g3/Bg2 - very safe po...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Center Trap

After 2.c4, if Black plays ...d4?! 3.e3! dx3 4.fx3 and White has a strong center or if ...d4 3.b4! reversed Blumenfeld Gambit with initiative. AVOID (Black): Play ...e6, ...c6 or ...dxc4.



Transposition Trap

After ...e6 3.g3, we're close to the Catalan! If Black doesn't know it, they can suffer from the Bg2 targeting d5. AVOID (Black): Know the Catalan or play ...c6 (Slav structure).



Gambit Trap

If ...dxc4 2...d4?! White has 3.e3! and the d4 pawn falls or creates weaknesses. Black's structure is compromised. AVOID (Black): After ...dxc4, play ...e6 or ...c6, not ...d4.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Réti Accepted

2...dxc4 3.e3 c5 4.Bxc4 Nc...

■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs:
Recover the pawn and develop. If 0-0 then a6, b5 or ...Qc7 to equalize.



Réti with Bg2

2...e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 ...

■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs:
Double fianchetto possible! Setup position: 0-0, Bg2, Nf6, Bf4, ...Bd7, ...Bd7 to contest the center.



Catalan Transposition

2...e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 dxc4...

■ 54% ■ 46%

Blancs:
No transpose into the Open Catalan! Instead, play 0-0, ...Be7, ...0-0 with defensive

KING'S INDIAN ATTACK

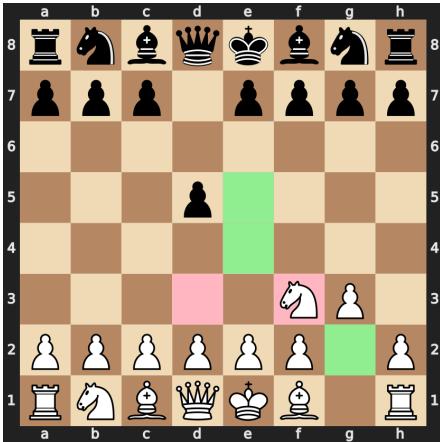
Level: Advanced

Champions: Fischer, Korchnoi, Ivanchuk

King's Indian Attack • 1.Nf3 d5 2.g3

■ 52%

■ 48%



MAIN IDEA

The universal attacking system for White! With Nf3, g3, Bg2, 0-0, d3, e4, Nbd2, White builds a solid setup that works against almost any Black response. The plan is simple: once developed, push e4-e5 or f2-f4-f5 to attack the kingside. It's the perfect opening for players who want to avoid theory and play their favorite positions. Fischer used it to crush strong opponents!

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing too slowly: once developed, the attack must start with e5 or f4
- Forgetting the center: e4 is important, don't let Black play ...d4
- Ignoring Black's counterplay: ...c5 and ...b5 can be annoying

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Being too passive: ...d5, ...c5 must fight for space
- Ignoring the kingside attack: ...h6 can be useful to prevent Bg5
- Castling kingside into the attack: sometimes queenside castle is better

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Knight g1:**
Nf3 is always the first move - flexible and s...
- Pawn d3:**
Supports e4 and keeps a flexible structure ...

- Pawn g3 + Bishop:**
g3 then Bg2 - the fianchetto controls the lo...
- Knight b1:**
Nbd2 supports e4 and can go to f1-e3 or h...

- King:**
0-0 quickly to secure the King and activate ...
- Pawn e4:**
The thematic move! After preparation, e4 o...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Attack Trap

Typical position. White prepares e5 with Qe2, h3, then e5! If ...Nfd7 f4-f5 opens lines for a deadly attack.
Avoid (Black): Play ...dxe4 ...e5 to block the advance.



Closed Center Trap

After e5 Nfd7 f4, White aims for f5! Opening the f-file will be devastating for the Black King. **Avoid (Black):** Play ...f6 or ...f5 to block White's pawn advance.



Fianchetto Trap

If Black plays ...dxe4?! 5.dxe4 Qxd1+ Rxd1, White has a good middlegame with the active Bg2 and d-file.
Avoid (Black): Keep tension in the center, don't exchange on e4.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Against the French

1.e4 e6 2.d3 d5 3.Nd2 Nf6...
■ 53% ■ 47%

Blancs:
Bf2-h0, then prepare e5, white Qe2 and Re1. ...dxe4 after, the center is open for follow by ...e5 to block the



Against the Sicilian

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d3 Nc6 ...
■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs:
Avoid the theoretical lines of the Black Basmanov line, when Ne1-h1. Bg5, play ...Ng7, ...g6 and look for ...Nxe7, ...g5 and look for



Universal System

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 c...
■ 52% ■ 48%

Blancs:
Flexible structure. Nbd2, e4, when ready Nbd2, e4, when ready Nbd2, e4, then ...0-0 with a solid

SICILIAN DEFENSE

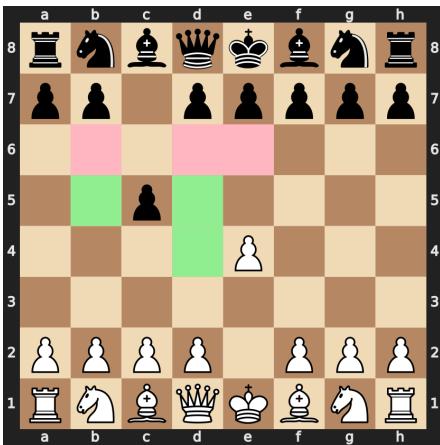
Level: Advanced

Champions: Kasparov, Fischer, Nakamura

1.e4 c5

■ 52%

■ 48%



MAIN IDEA

Black refuses the symmetry of 1...e5 and fights for the center with the c-pawn. After d4 cxd4 Nxd4, Black has exchanged a wing pawn (c) for a central pawn (d) - excellent deal! This creates an immediate imbalance: White has more space in the center, but Black has a queenside pawn majority and the semi-open c-file. This is the most combative opening and the most played at the highest level.

WHITE'S MISTAKES

- Playing d4 without Nf3 first: after ...cxd4 Qxd4?? ...Nc6 gains time on the Queen
- Ignoring the ...b5-b4 counter-attack: Black can chase the Nc3 and create weaknesses
- Pushing pawns without developing: premature f4-f5 or g4-g5 advance leaves the King exposed

BLACK'S MISTAKES

- Playing ...d5 too early: after exd5 Qxd5, the Queen gets chased by Nc3 and White develops with tempo
- Neglecting the development of the Nf6: this Knight is crucial for control of d5 and e4
- Letting a White Knight settle on d5: without Nf6 to exchange it, this Knight becomes dominant

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

- Nf6:** Develop quickly - controls d5, attacks e4, e...
- Nb8:** Develop to c6 (classical) or d7 (Schevenin...

d-pawn: Choose between ...d6 (solid, Schevening...

Rooks: The Ra8 goes to c8 for the semi-open c-fil...

- Bf8:** Fianchetto ...g6/...Bg7 (Dragon) or ...Be7 (...Bf8)
- King:** Kingside castling is usual, but queenside c...

TRAPS TO KNOW



Siberian Trap

Alapin: 2.c3 d5 3.exd5 Qxd5 4.d4 Nf6?? 5.Na3! The Na3 goes to b5, attacking c7. AVOID: Play 4...e6! or 4...Nc6 instead of Nf6 to control b5.



Dragon Trap

Yugoslav Attack: if Black plays ...Rc8 without preparation, Bxf6! Bxf6 Nd5! is devastating. AVOID: Play ...Rfc8 and ...Ne5 first before ...Rc8.



Najdorf Trap

After 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Qb6?? 8.Qd2! (or Nb3) the Queen is misplaced, b6 and f7 become weak. AVOID: Play ...Be7 or ...Nbd7 before bringing out the Queen.

MAIN VARIATIONS



Dragon

2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4... ■53% ■47%

Blancs:

The Yugoslav Attack! f3, Be3, Ne5! is a popular line for the Dragon. It bypasses the c5 pawn and forces ...Qa5, ...Nc6-e5 and push



Najdorf

2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4... ■52% ■48%

Blancs:

Several options: 6.Be3, Ne5! and Bc6 presents a threat and prevents Bb7/Nb5. Then choose



Sveshnikov

2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4... ■51% ■49%

Blancs:

After Ndb5 d6, the Knight is seriously threatened by the Bishop pair, the f5 hole and the

✓ CHECKLIST

10 questions à se poser AVANT chaque coup

1 ÉCHEC ?

Mon adversaire me fait-il échec ? Puis-je faire échec ?

Un échec non vu = partie perdue. Toujours vérifier en premier !

2 PRISE ?

Y a-t-il une pièce en prise ? Puis-je capturer quelque chose ?

Regarder TOUTES les pièces : les miennes ET celles de l'adversaire.

3 MENACE ?

Quelle est la menace de mon adversaire ? Quelle est MA menace ?

Identifier la menace adverse AVANT de jouer son coup.

4 TACTIQUE ?

Y a-t-il une fourchette, un clouage, une enfilade, un échec double ?

Fourchette (2 pièces attaquées), Clouage (pièce immobilisée), Enfilade (2 pièces en ligne).

5 PIÈCES FAIBLES ?

Ai-je une pièce non défendue ? Mon adversaire en a-t-il une ?

Une pièce non défendue = cible tactique. Les compter à chaque coup.

6 ROI EN SÉCURITÉ ?

Mon Roi est-il en sécurité ? Celui de l'adversaire ?

Roi au centre = danger. Roquer tôt. Attention aux colonnes ouvertes.

7 DÉVELOPPEMENT ?

Toutes mes pièces sont-elles développées et actives ?

Cavaliers et Fous sortis, Tours connectées, pas de pièce passive.

8 CENTRE ?

Qui contrôle le centre ? Puis-je l'améliorer ?

Cases e4, d4, e5, d5 = les plus importantes. Pions + pièces au centre.

9 PLAN ?

Quel est mon plan ? Ce coup le sert-il ?

Chaque coup doit avoir un but. Pas de coup "en attendant".

10 BLUNDER CHECK !

Si je joue ce coup, que répond mon adversaire ?

TOUJOURS imaginer la réponse adverse AVANT de jouer. Évite 90% des erreurs !

■ ASTUCE : Mémoriser "É-P-M-T" (Échec, Prise, Menace, Tactique)

Les 4 premiers points couvrent 80% des erreurs. Toujours les vérifier !