

Where the Pirc and the King's Indian go wrong

791 games as Black · 2024-06 → 2026-10 · 3+2 blitz · Stockfish 19

GAMES ANALYSED

791

Pirc 532 · King's Indian 259

SCORE AS BLACK

53%

Pirc 54% · King's Indian 49%

WORSE BY MOVE 12

33%

expected score 40% or less after move 12

FLAGGED MOVES / GAME

2.34

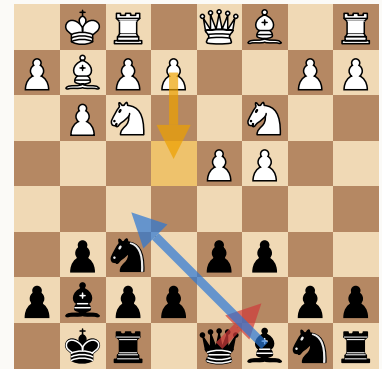
moves 4–20 losing 10+ points of expected score



KING'S INDIAN CLASSICAL, ...NBD7 p. 2
Take on d4 before ...c6



KING'S INDIAN SÄMISCH, 7.D5 p. 3
7...e6 at once, not ...Nbd7



KING'S INDIAN FIANCHETTO, ...C6 p. 4
...Bf5 or ...d5, never ...Qc7



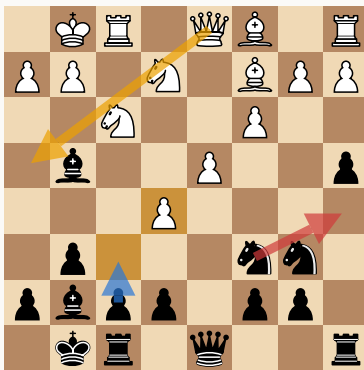
KING'S INDIAN FOUR PAWNS p. 5
6...c5, every time



PIRC BE3, 5.H3 p. 6
Against 5.h3, develop before ...b5



PIRC AUSTRIAN, 7.BG1 p. 7
After 7.Bg1: ...c5, not ...e5



PIRC AUSTRIAN, E5 WEDGE p. 8
Meet the e5 wedge with ...f6



KING'S INDIAN SÄMISCH GAMBIT p. 9
10.Nd5 Nd7 and let e7 go

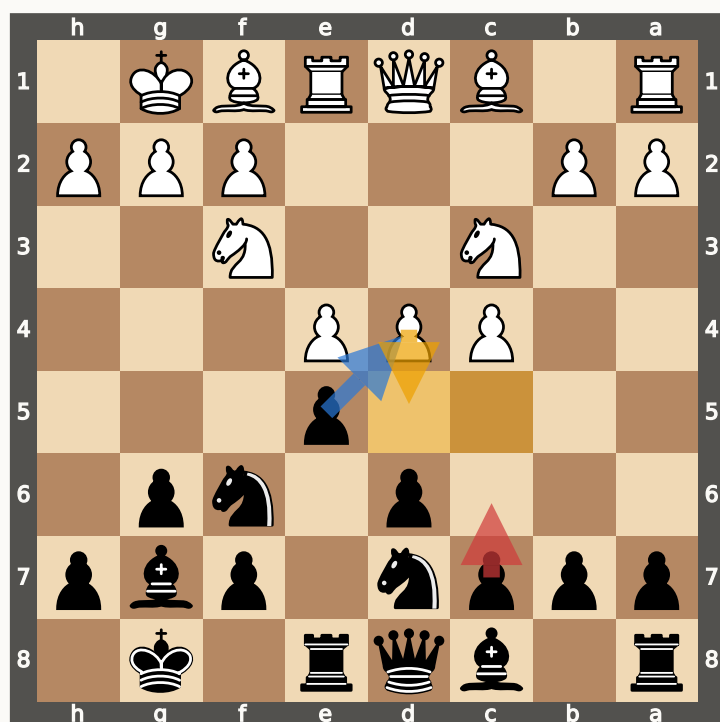


PIRC ...A6 LINE, 5.A4 p. 10
e4 is poisoned: 9...Bg7

what you usually play what to play instead White's plan or threat boards from Black's side · evaluations are White's view, in pawns, Stockfish 19 at the publication depth

The ...Nbd7 King's Indian: take on d4 before ...c6

After 8.Re1 Re8 9.Bf1, play 9...exd4 and only then ...c6. 9...c6 hands White 10.d5 for free.



1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 g6 3.e4 d6 4.d4 Bg7 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2 Nbd7 7.O-O e5 8.Re1 Re8 9.Bf1

r1bqr1k1/ppn1pbp/3p1np1/4p3/2PPP3/2N2N2/PP3PPP/R1BQRBK1 b - - 0 9

IN YOUR GAMES

Reached 8 times (2024-06 → 2026-04). You played ...c6 in 8; your score from here 44%. Bars: games (share) · your score. Opponents punished ...c6 in 2 of 7 games.

...c6 8 (100%) · 44%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

In any ...Nbd7/...e5 King's Indian, ask before every ...c6 whether d4-d5 is now a free move for White. If it is, exchange on d4 first.

Lesson: ...exd4 first, ...c6 second.

What you usually play: ...c6

9...c6 looks like natural preparation for ...Qc7, ...a5 or a later ...d5, and in 8 games you played it every time. It is exactly the move 9.Bf1 is waiting for: White answers 10.d5 and the pawn on c6 becomes a liability. Taking on d5 opens the c-file for White's rooks and leaves d6 backward; leaving the pawn on c6 means the knight has lost c5, while the bishop on f1 and the rook on e1 are ideally placed for the slow bind with h3, Bd3 and Kh1.

9...c6 10.d5 c5 11.h3 h6 12.Bd2 White is clearly better (+1.14) with no weaknesses to attack.

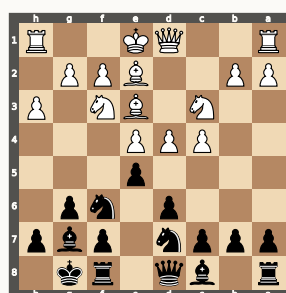
Play instead: ...exd4

Release the tension while it still gains something: 9...exd4 10.Nxd4 and the knight on d7 comes to e5 and then c5 or c6 with pressure on e4 and d4, the bishop on g7 has its diagonal back, and ...c6 with ...d5 or ...a5 becomes a plan rather than a wish. This is the standard treatment of the ...Nbd7 King's Indian once White has retreated the bishop to f1: with e4 needing care, White cannot both guard it and start the queenside expansion.

9...exd4 10.Nxd4 Ne5 11.Rb1 Nc6 12.Nc2 Nd7 A normal King's Indian (+0.42) with play against e4.

Why

The point of ...Nbd7 against the Classical is to keep the e5-d4 tension until the exchange on d4 wins a tempo or a square. With the bishop on f1 and the rook on e1, d4-d5 is strong whenever it comes with gain of time, and ...c6 gives it a target. After the exchange on d4 the knight gets c5 (hitting e4) or e5 (hitting c4), and ...c6 follows a move later with ...d5 or ...Qb6 behind it. The engine sees the problem with 9...c6 from depth 5: 10.d5 is simply strong, and nothing tactical is needed to understand it.



DRILL

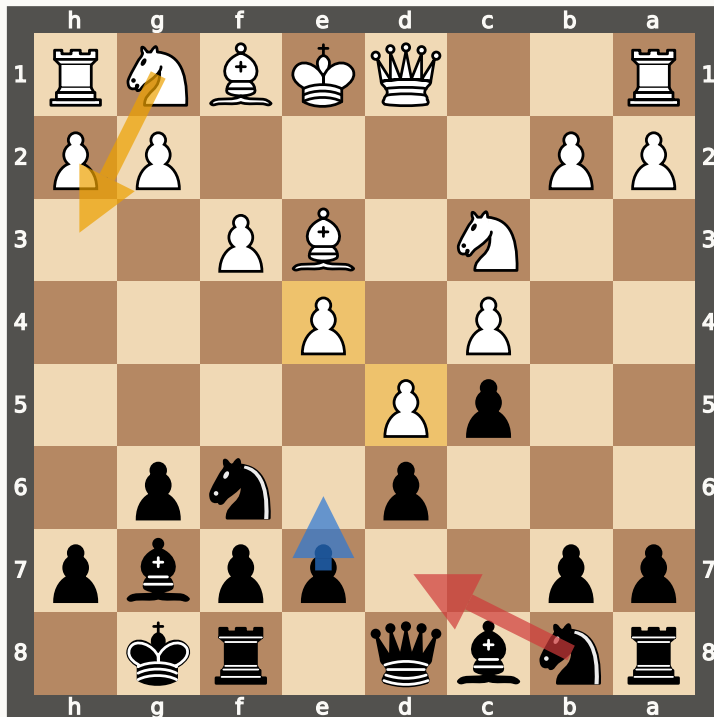
6.Be2 Nbd7 7.h3 e5 8.Be3. Black to play: what now?

Answer: exd4 — Be3 and h3 cost White time; 8...exd4 9.Nxd4 Re8 and e4 is a target (+0.02)

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 22): after ...c6 +0.99 (Black's expected score 26%), after ...exd4 +0.40 (46%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 5; the better move is stable from depth 14.
Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2026-04-11 · 2256 vs 2307 · loss · 38 moves · 2026-04-01 · 2253 vs 2259 · win · 43 moves

Sämisch Benoni: 7...e6 now, not ...Nbd7

After 6.Be3 c5 7.d5, hit the centre at once with 7...e6. 7...Nbd7 blocks your own counterplay.



1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.f3 g6 4.c4 Bg7 5.Nc3 O-O 6.Be3 c5 7.d5
rnbq1rk1/pp2ppbp/3p1np1/2pP4/2P1P3/2N1BP2/PP4PP/R2QKBNR b KQ - 0 7

IN YOUR GAMES

Reached **13** times (2024-06 → 2026-04). You played ...Nbd7 in 11; your score from here 46%. Bars: games (share) · your score.

...Nbd7 11 (85%) · 36%
...e6 2 (15%) · 100%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

When White closes the centre with d5 against your ...c5, the clock starts: open the e-file or the b-file before White's minor pieces reach the squares that defend e4.

Lesson: Against the Sämisch wedge, ...e6 immediately.

What you usually play: ...Nbd7

7...Nbd7 keeps everything flexible, or so it feels, and you played it in 85% of these games with a poor score. The engine's objection is modest in numbers (5 points) but clear in kind: the Sämisch chain c4–d5–e4–f3 has only two targets, d5 and e4, and both need the e-pawn or the b-pawn to open lines. With the knight on d7 the c8-bishop is shut in and ...e6 costs an extra move, so White calmly plays **8.Nh3** and Nf2, Qd2 and Be2, after which the kingside is sealed and g4–h4 comes for free. The real damage follows a few moves later, when the ...b5 break is delayed (see the drill).

7...Nbd7 8.Nh3 a6 9.a4 Ne5 10.Nf2 White has a free hand on the kingside (+0.84).

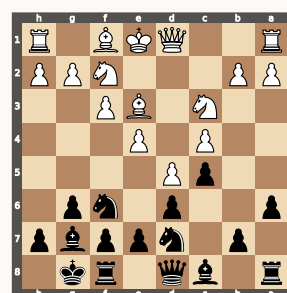
Play instead: ...e6

7...e6 asks the question immediately: after 8.Qd2 exd5 9.cxd5 the e-file is open, the rook comes to e8 against e4, and the knight has e5 via d7 or h5 once f3 has been played. White must spend moves on Nge2, Ng3 or Nh3–f2 to hold e4, and Black gets ...a6 and ...b5 or ...Nbd7–e5 with real pressure. In your two games with 7...e6 you won both.

7...e6 8.Qd2 exd5 9.cxd5 a6 10.a4 Re8 **A healthy Benoni (+0.15):** Black's pieces have targets.

Why

In Benoni structures the side with the space has to prove it can keep e4 and d5 stable; Black's whole game is to attack them before White has finished developing. 7...e6 does that while the g1-knight is still at home. 7...Nbd7 is a move for a closed King's Indian, not for a Benoni: it hopes for a later ...e5 that no longer works because d5 is already in. The engine sees the difference from depth 6 and its preference for 7...e6 is stable from depth 15; the reason is purely strategic, and your results from this position say the same thing more loudly.



DRILL

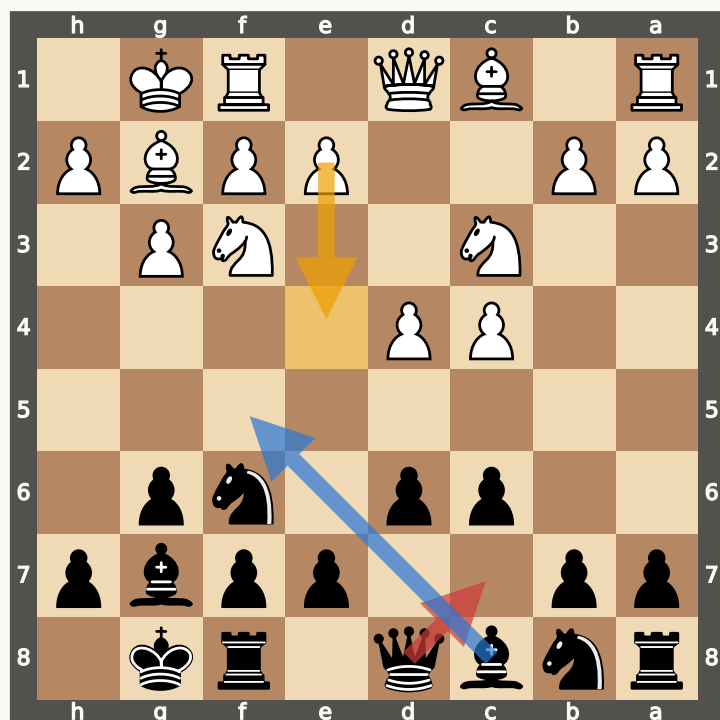
7...Nbd7 8.Nh3 a6 9.Nf2. Black to play: what now?

Answer: b5 — the point of ...a6; you played 9...Qa5 and 9...Rb8 here and lost both. After 9...b5 10.cxb5 axb5 11.Bxb5 Ba6 the files are worth the pawn (+0.52)

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 24): after ...Nbd7 +0.50 (Black's expected score 44%), after ...e6 +0.18 (49%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 6; the better move is stable from depth 15.
Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2025-07-13 · 2044 vs 1990 · loss · 15 moves · 2024-06-09 · 1979 vs 1918 · win · 15 moves

Fianchetto King's Indian: the queen on c7 and the free e4

After 6.c4 c6 7.Nc3, develop the c8-bishop with 7...Bf5 (or play 7...d5). 7...Qc7 lets 8.e4 come with tempo.



1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7 4.O-O O-O 5.d4 d6 6.c4 c6 7.Nc3
rnbq1rk1/pp2ppbp/2pp1np1/8/2PP4/2N2NP1/PP2PPBP/R1BQ1RK1 b - - 0 7

IN YOUR GAMES

Reached **13** times (2024-06 → 2026-09). You played ...Qc7 in 13; your score from here 54%. Bars: games (share) · your score. Opponents punished ...Qc7 in 7 of 10 games.

...Qc7 13 (100%) · 54%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

In closed fianchetto structures, count who gets the e4 or e5 push for free before you move the queen.

Lesson: Bishop before queen: ...Bf5 (or ...d5), not ...Qc7.

What you usually play: ...Qc7

You have played 7...Qc7 in all 13 games here. The idea is clear enough: support ...e5 and keep ...d5 in reserve. But against the fianchetto the one thing Black must not allow is a comfortable e2–e4. After **8.e4** the queen on c7 is already a target for a later e5 or Nb5, ...e5 runs into d5, and the c8-bishop is still waiting for a square. The engine marks the damage from depth 8, which is to say at once.

7...Qc7 8.e4 e5 9.h3 Nbd7 10.Be3 The classical ideal centre, and the queen is misplaced (+0.83).

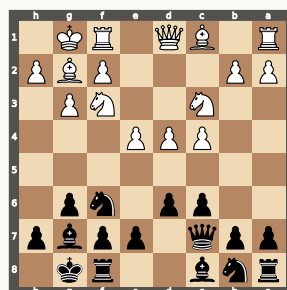
Play instead: ...Bf5

7...Bf5 puts the question to e4 first: the bishop controls e4 and d3, so White has to spend a tempo on Nh4, Nd2 or Re1 before the pawn can advance, and by then ...Qc8 or ...Ne4 is available. **7...d5** is the other good answer, turning the game into a Grünfeld-type structure in which ...c6 is exactly the right pawn. Both keep the queen at home until the centre is settled.

7...Bf5 8.Be3 Qd7 Black has solved the problem bishop (+0.40).

Why

The c6/d6 fianchetto King's Indian is a slow structure in which the breaks ...e5 and ...d5 only work if White cannot answer with a well-timed e4 or d5. The queen belongs on a5 (pinning the knight), on c8 or on e7, never on c7 where e4–e5 or Nb5 hits it. A move that improves nothing on the kingside and gives White e4 for free is the kind of inaccuracy that costs no material and half the game.



DRILL

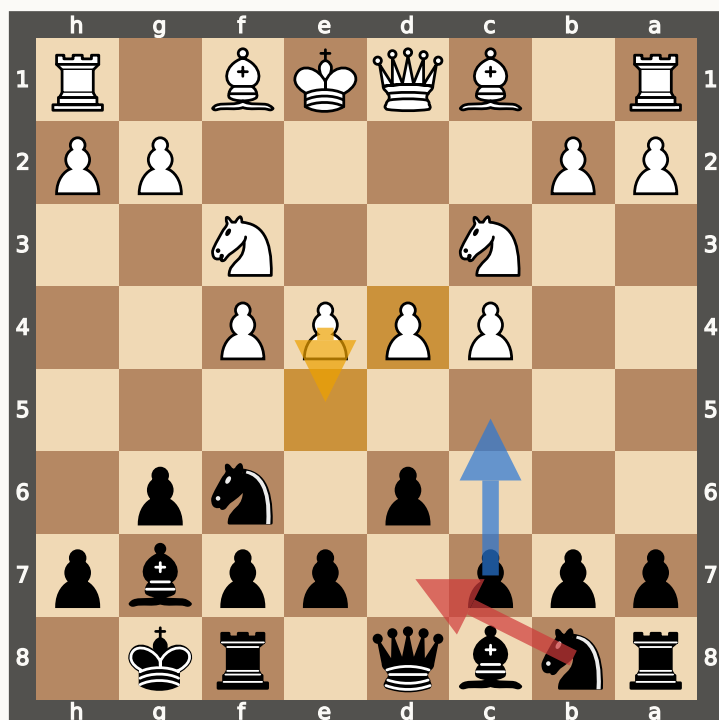
7...Qc7 8.e4 has been played. Black to play: the least bad continuation?

Answer: e5 — 8...e5 at least stakes a claim in the centre; the position is already uncomfortable (+0.82), which is the point of the page

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 22): after ...Qc7 +0.78 (Black's expected score 36%), after ...Bf5 +0.37 (46%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 8; the better move is stable from depth 13.
Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2025-12-22 · 2166 vs 2196 · loss · 32 moves · 2026-09-10 · 2242 vs 2409 · draw · 59 moves

Four Pawns Attack: strike at d4 at once

After 5.f4 O-O 6.Nf3 the only move is 6...c5. A knight move lets 7.e5 roll.



1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d6 4.e4 Bg7 5.f4 O-O 6.Nf3

rnbq1rk1/ppp1ppbp/3p1np1/8/2PPPP2/2N2N2/PP4PP/R1BQKB1R b KQ - 0 6

IN YOUR GAMES

Reached 6 times (2025-04 → 2025-12). You played ...Nbd7 in 3; your score from here 25%. Bars: games (share) · your score. Opponents punished ...Nbd7 in 1 of 1 games.

...Nbd7	3 (50%) · 33%
...c5	2 (33%) · 25%
...Nc6	1 (17%) · 0%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

Against a big pawn centre the first move is the pawn break, not a developing move.

Lesson: Four Pawns: 6...c5, every time.

What you usually play: ...Nbd7

Your results against the Four Pawns are among the worst of any system you face. In this position you have tried 6...Nbd7, 6...Nc6 and 6...c5, and the knight moves are the ones that went wrong. After 6...Nbd7 7.e5 comes with tempo: the knight has to go back to e8, c4-c5 follows, and White's pawn mass does all the work while the c8-bishop watches. 6...Nc6 invites d4-d5 for the same reason.

6...Nbd7 7.e5 Ne8 8.c5 c6 9.h4 White's pawns are rolling and nothing of yours is developed (+1.13).

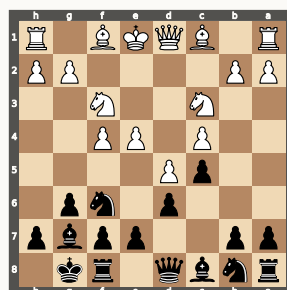
Play instead: ...c5

6...c5 is the main line for a reason: after 7.d5 e6 8.Be2 exd5 9.cxd5 the structure is a Benoni in which White's f4 pawn is a weakness rather than a strength. The e4 pawn is loose, ...Re8 and ...Bg4 come with tempo, and ...b5 is in the air. If White plays 7.dxc5 instead, 7...Qa5 regains the pawn with a comfortable game.

6...c5 7.d5 e6 8.Be2 exd5 9.cxd5 Re8 A Benoni where e4 is the target (+0.11).

Why

Four pawns on c4, d4, e4 and f4 are a promise, not an achievement: they have to be defended, and they are only dangerous if they advance together. The counter is a pawn strike at the base of the chain while White's pieces are still at home. ...c5 does that and gets the queen to a5 or b6 behind it; a developing knight move does nothing against the centre and lets e4-e5 shut your pieces out of the game.



DRILL

6...c5 7.d5. Black to play: what now?

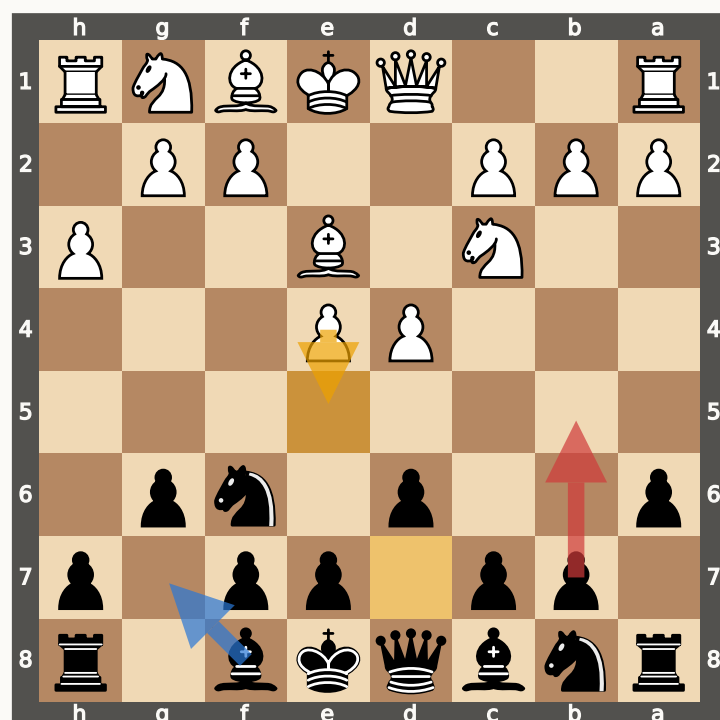
Answer: e6 — open the e-file at once; after 8.Be2 exd5 9.cxd5 the e4 pawn is a target (+0.22)

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 22): after ...Nbd7 +1.06 (Black's expected score 22%), after ...c5 +0.24 (48%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 1; the better move is stable from depth 15.

Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2025-04-12 · 2007 vs 2041 · loss · 21 moves · 2025-12-25 · 2142 vs 2004 · win · 27 moves

The ...a6 Pirc against h3: ...b5 one move too early

After 4.Be3 a6 5.h3, develop before ...b5: 5...Bg7 or 5...Nbd7. The pawn push allows 6.e5 with tempo.



1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Be3 a6 5.h3

rnbqkb1r/1pp1pp1p/p2p1np1/8/3PP3/2N1B2P/PPP2PP1/R2QKBNR b KQkq - 0 5

IN YOUR GAMES

Reached 7 times (2024-06 → 2026-06). You played ...b5 in 7; your score from here 57%. Bars: games (share) · your score. Opponents punished ...b5 in 5 of 5 games.

...b5 7 (100%) · 57%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

Before ...b5 in the ...a6 Pirc, check e4–e5: if the f6 knight must go to d7 and Qf3 then hits a8 and f7, develop first.

Lesson: ...b5 after castling, not before, while White's queen is still on d1.

What you usually play: ...b5

You play 4...a6 against Be3 in every game, and after 5.Qd2 you follow up with ...b5, which is correct. Against 5.h3 you have played 5...b5 in all 7 games, and it is a different story: 6.e5 hits the knight, 6...Nfd7 7.Qf3 attacks f7 and the rook on a8 at the same time, and 7...Nb6 8.a4 breaks up the queenside before you have castled. Opponents found this in most of these games, and most of them were decided by move 12.

5...b5 6.e5 Nfd7 7.Qf3 Nb6 8.a4 White is clearly better (+1.19) and your king is still in the centre.

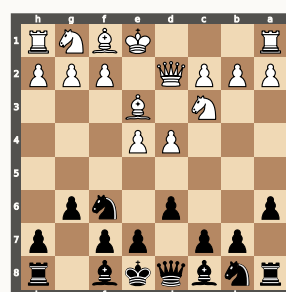
Play instead: ...Bg7

Keep the move order flexible. 5...Bg7 is the natural move and 5...Nbd7 is the engine's first choice; both keep ...b5 for the moment when e4–e5 has lost its sting, which is once the bishop is on g7, the king can castle and d7 is a safe retreat. Against 5.Qd2 the push is fine because 6.e5 can be met by ...dxe5 and a queen exchange; that is why ...b5 is right against 5.Qd2 and wrong against 5.h3.

5...Bg7 6.Be2 b5 7.e5 Nfd7 8.f4 Bb7 Your normal ...a6 Pirc (+0.65); the e5 push no longer bites.

Why

The ...a6/...b5 Pirc is a fine system, but it is a race: the queenside pawns go forward before the king is safe, so every tempo matters and e4–e5 is the move to watch. The difference between 5.Qd2 and 5.h3 is not the pawn on h3 but the queen still on d1, which keeps Qf3 and Qxd8 ideas alive after e5. Once you have castled and the knight can go to d7 without walking into Qf3, ...b5 is safe. The engine sees 6.e5 from depth 11, and the reasons are entirely human.



DRILL

4.Be3 a6 5.Qd2. Black to play: is ...b5 right here?

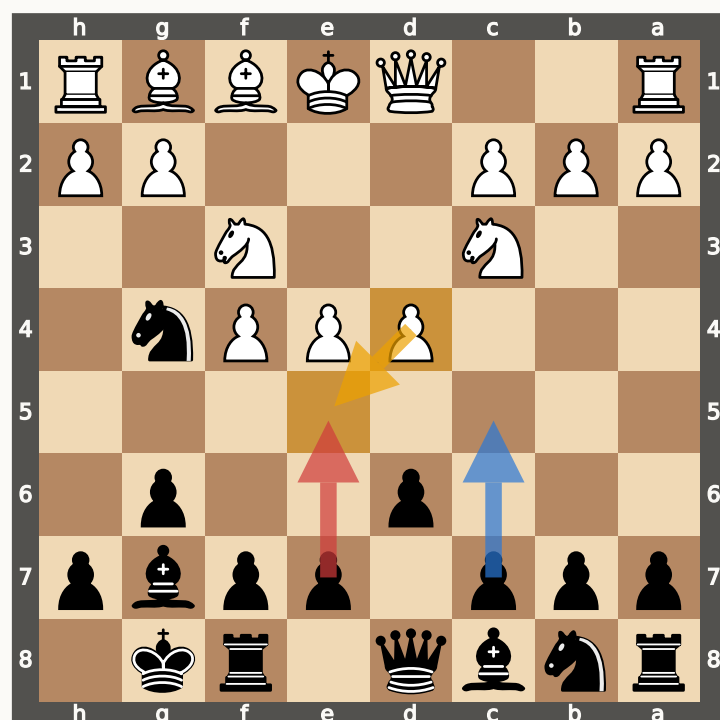
Answer: b5 — yes: with the queen on d2, 6.e5 dxe5 7.dxe5 Qxd2+ trades queens and the push has no sting (+0.60)

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 22): after ...b5 +1.31 (Black's expected score 11%), after ...Bg7 +1.02 (24%); the engine's first choice ...Nbd7 +0.71 (38%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 11; the better move is stable from depth 15.

Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2026-03-11 · 2245 vs 2246 · loss · 25 moves · 2025-12-13 · 2151 vs 2199 · win · 17 moves

Austrian Attack: when the bishop goes to g1, hit d4, not e5

After 6.Be3 Ng4 7.Bg1, play 7...c5. 7...e5 loses the e5 pawn to 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.h3.



1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be3 Ng4 7.Bg1
rnbq1rk1/ppp1ppbp/3p2p1/8/3PPPn1/2N2N2/PPP3PP/R2QKBRR b KQ - 0 7

IN YOUR GAMES

Reached 3 times (2025-01 → 2025-05). You played ...e5 in 3; your score from here 67%. Bars: games (share) · your score.

...e5 3 (100%) · 67%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

In the Austrian, ...e5 opens the d-file. If the queen exchange favours White, strike with ...c5 instead.

Lesson: 7.Bg1 c5.

What you usually play: ...e5

7...e5 is the thematic Pirc blow and you played it in all 3 games here, but it fails to a simple sequence: 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.h3, the knight must go back, and after 10.Qxd8 Rxd8 11.Nxe5 White has won a pawn with a safe king and the open d-file. The queens come off and e5 cannot be held because the knight on g4 has no square that also defends it. The engine sees the pawn loss from depth 4, and so would you with ten more seconds.

7...e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.h3 Nf6 10.Qxd8 Rxd8 11.Nxe5 A clean pawn down (+2.17).

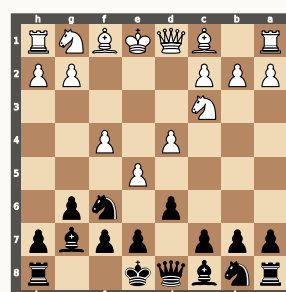
Play instead: ...c5

7...c5 is the move the position asks for: the bishop on g1 and the pawn on f4 have left d4 short of defenders, so 8.h3 cxd4 9.Bxd4 Nf6 gives Black a healthy Dragon-type structure with the d4 bishop exposed and ...Nc6 coming with tempo. 8.d5 leaves the bishop on g1 a sorry piece, and 8.Qd2 cxd4 9.Bxd4 e5 is also fine. The resulting positions are level and easy to play.

7...c5 8.h3 cxd4 9.Bxd4 Nf6 10.Qd2 Nc6 Level (+0.12), with the better minor pieces.

Why

In the Austrian the two breaks ...c5 and ...e5 are not interchangeable. ...e5 works when it opens lines against a king still in the centre and when the e5 pawn or the e-file will be yours; after 6.Be3 Ng4 7.Bg1 the queens come off on d8 and the open d-file belongs to White. ...c5 works when d4 is the weak point, and after Be3–g1 it is: the bishop has spent two tempi defending d4 passively and the pawn on f4 means e3 is no longer available. Choose the break by asking which central pawn is the weaker one, not by habit.



DRILL

4.f4 Bg7 5.e5. Black to play: what now?

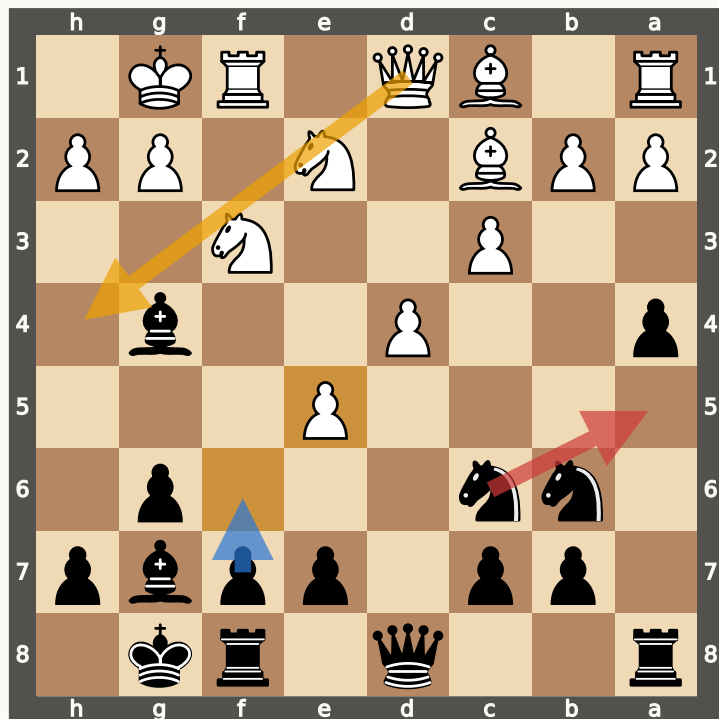
Answer: Nfd7 — keep the tension: 6.Nf3 c5 undermines the centre (+0.06); after 5...dxe5 6.dxe5 Qxd1+ 7.Kxd1 White keeps the space

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 21): after ...e5 +2.05 (Black's expected score 1%), after ...c5 +0.12 (49%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 4; the better move is stable from depth 7.

Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2025-03-29 · 2053 vs 2048 · loss · 14 moves · 2025-01-22 · 2159 vs 2164 · win · 25 moves

The e5 wedge against ...Nc6: undermine it with ...f6 at once

When White's e5 pawn stands against your ...Nc6 setup in the Austrian, answer ...f6 immediately. Knight tours and ...e6 let the wedge stand.



1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Bc4 O-O 6.e5 dxe5 7.fxe5 Nfd7
8.Nce2 Nb6 9.Bb3 Nc6 10.c3 a5 11.Nf3 a4 12.Bc2 Bg4 13.O-O

Representative position from one of the seven games; the other six reached the same structure (pawns on d4 and e5 against ...Nc6) by different move orders.

r2q1rk1/1pp1ppbp/1nn3p1/4P3/p2P2b1/2P2N2/PPB1N1PP/R1BQ1RK1 b - - 0 13

IN YOUR GAMES

The same structure in 7 games (2024-12 → 2026-03): 7 mistakes in 7 different positions, 29% of them lost. The bars show what you played at those moments.

...Na5		1 (14%) · 100%
...Be6		1 (14%) · 0%
...Bh6		1 (14%) · 100%
4 other moves		4 (57%) · 75%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

An e5 wedge with the d4 pawn behind it: ...f6 as soon as it is playable, before the queen and a knight arrive on the kingside.

Lesson: Wedge on e5, pawn to f6.

What you usually play: ...Na5

White pawns on d4 and e5 against your knights on c6 and b6 (or d5): this structure keeps appearing in your games with the Bd3 and Bc4 Austrian, and each time the engine's verdict is the same. In this game you played 13...Na5, heading for c4, and White answered 14.Qe1 and Qh4 with Bh6 to follow: with the e5 pawn fixed, every White piece joins the kingside attack and the knight on c4 arrives too late. In the other games of this cluster the wedge was left standing in the same way, with knight tours, ...Be6 or ...Bh6 instead of the pawn break.

13...Na5 14.Qe1 Qd7 15.Qh4 f6 16.Bh6 The wedge stands and the attack plays itself (+2.02).

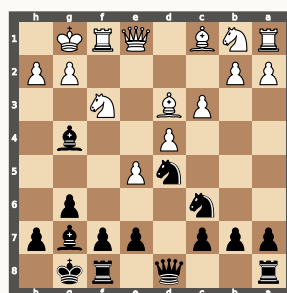
Play instead: ...f6

13...f6 is the standard reply to an e5 wedge supported only by the d4 pawn: after 14.exf6 Rxf6 the f-file is yours, the bishop on g7 finally sees d4, and the knights on b6 and c6 find squares on d5 and e7. White's c3, Bc2 and Ne2 setup is too slow to punish the slightly loose king, and the position is level.

13...f6 14.exf6 Rxf6 15.Ng3 Rf8 Level (+0.16), and the wedge is gone.

Why

A pawn wedge on e5 is strong only while it is stable and the pieces behind it have no targets; once it can be exchanged by ...f6, the game changes character. The rule in Pirc and Alekhine structures is to challenge the wedge before White's queen reaches the kingside and a knight is supported on e4 or f3: once Qe1-h4 and Bh6 are in, ...f6 is no longer safe and the attack plays itself. The engine prefers ...f6 from depth 7; the reason is structural, not tactical.



DRILL

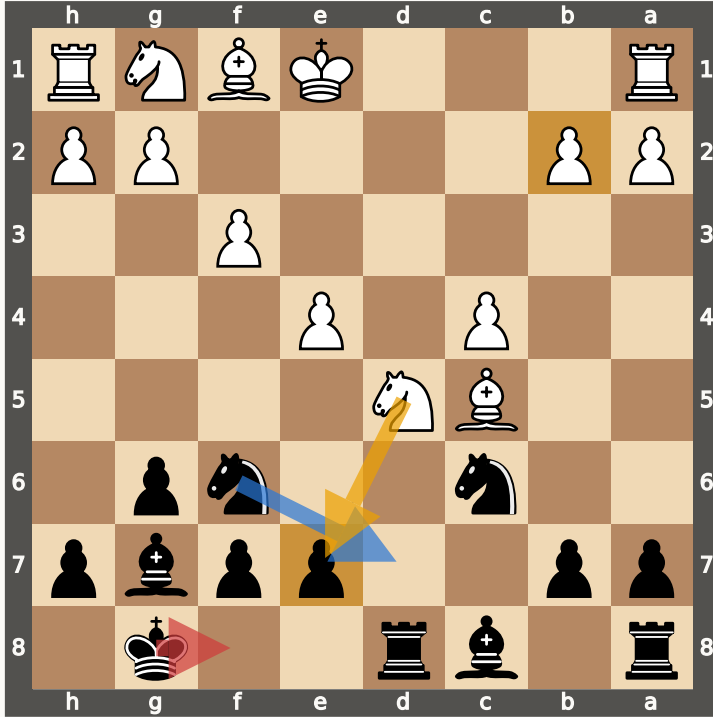
Same wedge, another game:
9...Bg4 10.Qe1. Black to play:
what now?

Answer: f6 — you played 10...e6 here and locked the position; 10...f6 breaks the wedge at once (+0.39)

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 22): after ...Na5 +1.64 (Black's expected score 3%), after ...f6 +0.20 (49%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 7; the better move is stable from depth 7.
Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2026-02-11 · 2230 vs 2288 · loss · 43 moves · 2026-03-02 · 2255 vs 2232 · win · 31 moves

Sämisch Gambit: after 10.Nd5, the book move is 10...Nd7

After 9.Bxc5 Nc6 10.Nd5, play 10...Nd7 and let the e7 pawn go; 10...Kf8 and 10...Nxd5 hand the pawn back for nothing.



1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d6 4.e4 Bg7 5.f3 O-O 6.Be3 c5 7.dxc5 dxc5 8.Qxd8 Rxd8 9.Bxc5 Nc6 10.Nd5

r1br2k1/pp2ppbp/2n2np1/2BN4/2P1P3/5P2/PP4PP/R3KBNR b KQ - 2 10

IN YOUR GAMES

Reached **6** times (2024-06 → 2026-01). You played **...Kf8** in 2; your score from here 50%. Bars: games (share) · your score.

...Kf8		2 (33%) · 50%
...Nxd5		2 (33%) · 50%
...Nd7		1 (17%) · 0%
...e6		1 (17%) · 100%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

In a gambit position, before you defend a pawn, ask whether the pawn or the tempo matters more. Here the tempo always matters more.

Lesson: 10.Nd5 Nd7, and the e7 pawn is not your problem.

What you usually play: ...Kf8

This is the main line of the Sämisch Gambit, which you reach regularly because you always answer the Sämisch with ...c5. White threatens Nxe7+, and the natural reactions **10...Kf8** and **10...Nxd5** both hand back the gambit pawn and leave White the bishop pair and the better structure. You have played four different moves here in 6 games, which says the position is not part of your preparation.

10...Kf8 11.Ne2 Nxd5 12.cxd5 Bxb2 13.Rb1 Ne5 White keeps the better structure and the bishops (+0.47).

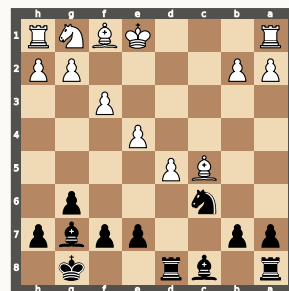
Play instead: ...Nd7

10...Nd7! is the point of the gambit: 11.Nxe7+ Nxe7 12.Bxe7 Bxb2 13.Rd1 Re8 and the bishop on e7 has to leave, after which ...Rxe4 or ...Nc5 wins the pawn back with the more active pieces. White has nothing better than giving the e7 pawn back, and Black is the one with the ideas.

10...Nd7 11.Nxe7+ Nxe7 12.Bxe7 Bxb2 13.Rd1 Re8 Level (+0.02), and the e4 pawn is the next target.

Why

A pawn sacrifice has to be followed up with the moves that justify it. The c5 pawn was given for the lead in development and the long diagonal; the king on g8 is perfectly safe, so a king move is a wasted tempo, and recapturing on d5 reopens the c-file for White's bishop and rook. 10...Nd7 keeps everything working: the knight hits c5 and e5, the bishop takes b2 at the right moment, and the e7 pawn is of no consequence. What the engine really tests here is whether you know the line.



DRILL

10...Nxd5 11.cxd5 has happened. Black to play: what now?

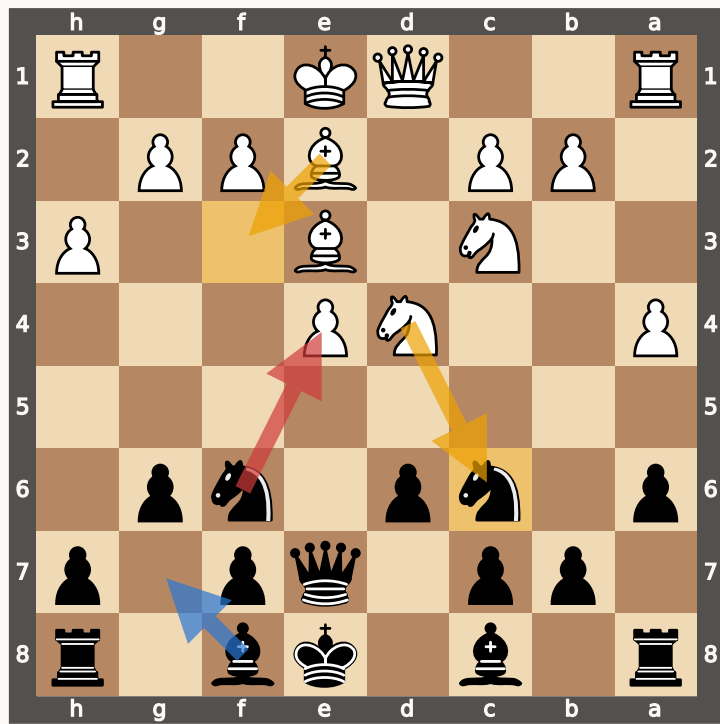
Answer: b6 — ask the bishop where it is going before ...Nd4 or ...Bxb2; Black is close to equal (+0.28), so 10...Nxd5 was the lesser evil, but 10...Nd7 keeps more

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 23): after ...Kf8 +0.70 (Black's expected score 41%), after ...Nd7 +0.05 (50%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 1; the better move is stable from depth 13.

Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2026-01-22 · 2193 vs 2311 · loss · 45 moves · 2024-06-10 · 1981 vs 1953 · win · 88 moves

The ...a6 Pirc with ...Nc6 and ...e5: e4 is poisoned

After 7.Nf3 exd4 8.Nxd4 Qe7 9.Be2, do not take on e4: 10.Nxe4 Qxe4 11.Bf3 hits the queen while c6 hangs, 12.Nxc6 wins a piece, and ...bxc6 runs into Bxc6+ and Bxa8. Finish development with 9...Bg7.



1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Be3 a6 5.a4 Nc6 6.h3 e5 7.Nf3 exd4 8.Nxd4 Qe7 9.Be2

r1b1kb1r/1pp1qp1p/p1np1np1/8/P2NP3/2N1B2P/1PP1BPP1/R2QK2R b KQkq - 2 9

IN YOUR GAMES

Reached 2 times (2026-05 → 2026-08). You played ...Nxe4 in 2; your score from here 0%. Bars: games (share) · your score.

...Nxe4 2 (100%) · 0%

PATTERN TO RECOGNISE

Queen on the e-file, knight on d4 against your knight on c6, bishop able to reach f3: the e4 pawn is not free.

Lesson: With the queen on e7, ...Nxe4 only after the c6 knight is gone or the a8 rook is defended.

What you usually play: ...Nxe4

You have played 9...Nxe4 twice in this exact position and lost both games. The capture looks safe because the queen on e7 seems to cover the knight, but after 10.Nxe4 Qxe4 11.Bf3 the queen is attacked and has to leave the diagonal that guards c6, and 12.Nxc6 wins a piece for a pawn: recapturing with 12...bxc6 loses the rook as well after 13.Bxc6+ and Bxa8. The engine sees it from depth 1; it is a one-move check that was skipped twice.

9...Nxe4 10.Nxe4 Qxe4 11.Bf3 Qh4 12.Nxc6 White wins a piece (+6.61).

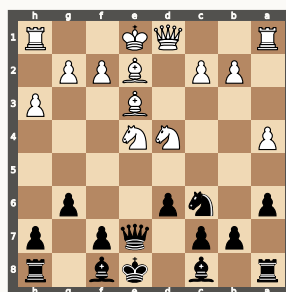
Play instead: ...Bg7

The position after 9...Bg7 is simply fine for Black: 10.O-O O-O 11.Bd3 Nxd4 12.Bxd4 c5 and the pieces are active, the a4 and h3 moves have cost White time, and ...Nxe4 becomes a real threat once the queen is no longer the only defender of the knight.

9...Bg7 10.O-O O-O 11.Bd3 Comfortable for Black (+0.11).

Why

The pattern is the one from the Scotch and the Open Sicilian: a knight on d4 facing a knight on c6, a black queen on the e-file and a white bishop that can reach the long diagonal. Bf3 hits the queen while the knight on d4 still eyes c6; the queen has to move, c6 falls, and once ...bxc6 has been forced the bishop on f3 sees a8. Whenever your queen stands on e7 or e5 with the a8 rook unguarded, count White's bishop to f3 before taking on e4.



DRILL

You took on e4 and White recaptured. Black to play: what now, and why not 10...Qxe4?

Answer: Bg7 — 10...Qxe4 11.Bf3 hits the queen and 12.Nxc6 follows, so the piece is lost either way; 10...Bg7 fights on (+6.55)

Stockfish 19 at the publication budget (depth 22): after ...Nxe4 +6.73 (Black's expected score 0%), after ...Bg7 +0.15 (49%). White's view. The damage is visible to the engine from depth 1; the better move is stable from depth 1.

Your games (date · your rating vs theirs · result · length): 2026-08-01 · 2168 vs 2168 · loss · 11 moves · 2026-05-03 · 2206 vs 2156 · loss · 11 moves

Your repertoire at a glance

Family	White system	Games	Score	Your usual line	Verdict	Key rule	Page
Pirc	Austrian Attack	140	55%	4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Bd3 Nc6 (or 6.Be3 Ng4)	watch	Pick the break by the weaker pawn: ...c5 vs Be3-g1, ...f6 vs the e5 wedge	7, 8
Pirc	150 Attack	110	52%	4.Be3 a6 5.Qd2 b5	watch	Opening fine; the ...b5/...c5 races go wrong tactically between moves 11 and 18, more than in any other structure	–
King's Indian	Classical	85	48%	6.Be2 Nbd7 7.O-O e5 8.Re1 Re8	problem	Exchange on d4 before ...c6	2
Pirc	Byrne system (Bg5)	66	36%	4.Bg5 Bg7 5.Qd2 h6 / 5.e5 Nfd7	problem	Your worst Pirc score; the losses come from many different middlegames, not one position	–
Pirc	Bc4 system	56	63%	4.Bc4 Bg7 5.Qe2 Nc6	fine	Keep doing what you do	–
King's Indian	Sämisch	44	40%	5.f3 O-O 6.Be3 c5 7.d5 Nbd7	problem	7...e6 at once; after ...a6, ...b5 without delay	3, 9
King's Indian	Fianchetto	43	48%	5.d4 d6 6.c4 c6 7.Nc3 Qc7	watch	...Bf5 or ...d5 before the queen moves	4
Pirc	Classical	42	58%	4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Be2 O-O	fine	Solid; nothing recurring found	–
Pirc	other e4 systems	37	58%	various	fine	No recurring problem found	–
Pirc	Nf3 and h3	29	59%	4.Be3 a6 5.a4 Nc6 6.h3 e5	watch	Do not grab e4 with the queen on e7 behind the knight	10
King's Indian	Makogonov (h3)	22	61%	5.Nf3 O-O 6.h3 e5 7.d5	fine	Scores well; the engine's complaints come late and are tactical	–
King's Indian	Four Pawns Attack	20	35%	5.f4 O-O 6.Nf3 Nbd7 / Nc6	problem	6...c5, every time	5
Pirc	Fianchetto	18	56%	4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 O-O	fine	No recurring problem found	–
Pirc	Nf3 and Bd3	16	75%	4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bd3 O-O	fine	Scores well	–
King's Indian	Bd3 system	13	85%	5.Bd3 O-O 6.Nge2	fine	Scores well	–
King's Indian	other King's Indian	13	35%	various	watch	Few games, poor score, no single cause	–
King's Indian	Averbakh	13	62%	6.Bg5 Nbd7	fine	No recurring problem found	–
Pirc	Be3 systems	12	58%	4.Be3 a6 5.h3 b5	problem	The 5.h3 b5 problem: develop first	6

METHOD

Games. All your blitz games as Black on chess.com (3+2), classified by the actual moves, not by the opening name attached to the game. Only Pirc and King's Indian structures were analysed; London, Torre and English games were counted but left out.

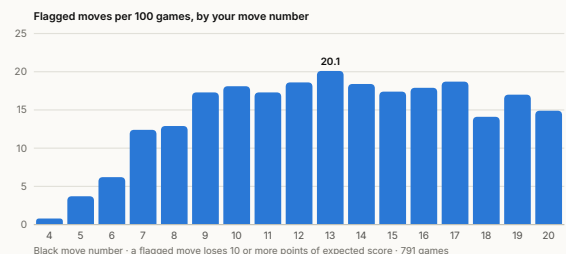
Engine. Stockfish 19. Every position from move 4 to move 20 was screened at 100,000 nodes (depth about 15). Every flagged move, your most frequent positions and their follow-ups were re-searched at 600,000 nodes, with three lines when Black is to move (median depth 17). Everything printed here was re-searched for 20 seconds with four lines on two threads (depth 18 to 26, typically 22; each page states its depth).

What counts as a mistake. Loss is measured in points of expected score from Stockfish's own win/draw/loss model, not in centipawns. A move enters the error pool when it loses eight or more points; the tile on page 1 and the chart on this page count the stricter set of ten or more points (1,851 of the 2,107 pooled moves). A page needs the same mistake in several games, or a usual move that is measurably below the engine's choice and that leads to trouble by move 12 more often than your baseline.

Visibility depth. For every flagged move the shallowest search depth at which Stockfish already sees half the damage was recorded. Positions that only a deep search understands were left out or marked as engine reasons; every page states the depth from which the engine sees the point.

Caveats. Blitz only; opponents are not named. No database of master games was used, so remarks about the standard treatment of a line come from general opening knowledge. Only moves 4 to 20 were scored. A move played with under fifteen seconds on the clock counts a quarter; a premove in an unfamiliar position or a probable mouse-slip counts half. Games lost on time were kept (348 of the 2,107 pooled moves come from them) and count as half a loss when a page's loss rate is computed.

WHERE YOU GO WRONG, BY MOVE NUMBER



HOW DEEP STOCKFISH MUST LOOK TO SEE YOUR MISTAKES

