Mastering Chess Strategy
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Preface

This book has its origin in my classes as a chess trainer in Chile and Ecuador. The objective of the book is purely practical: to help the reader to improve his skills within chess strategy. It does not pretend to fulfil any scientific, historic or artistic functions.

Thanks to my students and ex-students in Chile and Ecuador, whose feedback during classes certainly enriched this material. Also thanks to Alexandra and Nico for your patience while I was writing the book.

Johan Hellsten,
Riobamba,
September 2010
Introduction

Here I would like to comment briefly on some general aspects of this book.

Contents
This book touches a wide range of subjects related to middlegame strategy. Each subject comes with some explanatory examples, and in the second half of the book you will find related exercises. I am a strong supporter of the intensive use of exercises in the learning process. In my opinion, the closer you can get to a game situation when you are training (or teaching) chess, the faster progress can be expected.

In his excellent work Logika Sovremennyyh Shahmat (Modern Chess Logic), Belarusian writer and grandmaster Viacheslav Dydyshko mentions that one major problem faced by chess students is that the theoretical knowledge acquired from literature remains “alien” to us for a long time. In the heat of the battle we will probably rely on what our intuition tells us and, unfortunately, that doesn’t always coincide with our knowledge.

Advancing his thoughts a little further, it is one thing to read through and understand a couple of Rubinstein’s rook endgames, and quite another one to be able to play them like him! Naturally, any new chess knowledge has to be integrated in our mind with such depth that we are able to swiftly apply it in practice, even if a long time has passed since the learning moment. School kids often memorize a lot of facts before an exam, and forget most of it within a few weeks. (I, for one, would not like to repeat today my French or Maths exams from 1990.) In contrast, chess players need to store the information for a long time, and retrieve it without much delay. In this context I believe that exercises, alongside normal games and their posterior analysis, are one of the best tools. Compare the case of learning languages: few persons are able to speak a new language confidently after just reading through a few text and grammar books. What most of us need is practice, practice...
**Mastering Chess Strategy**

**Style and level**
I have tried to explain in the most didactical way possible what is actually happening on the board, without an excessive use of analysis, in order not to tire the reader. To experienced players some parts of the book will appear rather basic; and to others, more challenging. Club players will probably see a lot of things for the first time.

**Material**
There have been many different sources involved in the writing of this book, the most significant ones being *Chess Informant*, ChessBase *Megabase* and *Chess Today*. I have used a lot of my own games and fragments, simply because these are the games that I know best.

**Technology**
I used *Chess Assistant 8.1* for the elaboration of this book, with *Rybka 2.4* as the main analysis engine, and *Megabase 2008* as a main reference database.

**How to read this book?**
It makes sense to start with the first, short chapter since it touches upon several concepts that will be present during the rest of the book. In contrast, the rest of the chapters are rather independent, although I often make references to earlier examples. Each chapter is divided into several sections, which can be treated in the following, simple way:

1. Go through the explanatory examples;
2. Solve the related exercises;
3. Compare your solutions with the ones in the book.

**Advice for trainers**
It is easy to use this book as training material. Choose the section(s) that you need, go through the explanatory examples with your students, and then let them work with the related exercises. In practical terms, I suggest you always have the exercise positions arranged on chessboards. The time needed oscillates roughly between 5 and 20 minutes, depending on the exercise (they are presented in ascending order of difficulty) and the level of the student. The solutions can be presented in written form, or played out against the trainer, which creates a closer feeling for them. Please note that the solutions given in the book are not absolute truths – the important thing is to grasp the general strategical idea in each exercise.

One additional piece of advice: many of the explanatory examples, as well as some of the longer exercises, can easily be used as “quiz” games, where the students should find the best move at determined (for example, five) moments during the game, with the trainer awarding the corresponding points and giving hints if necessary.
Chapter One

Basic Concepts of Strategy

Introduction
The middlegame is perhaps the most demanding phase of the game, where the player is constantly faced with tactical and strategical challenges. Without doubt, tactical capacity is fundamental in order to conduct the direct battle on the board, creating and evading threats, etc. However, we also need some basic notion about what things are beneficial for us in the long run. In his great work *Strategia*, famous chess trainer Mark Dvoretsky outlined a range of concepts and related definitions, which, with some slight modifications, conform the theoretical basis of this chapter.

A review of the concepts
Basically, any action undertaken in the game can be abstracted to tactical and strategical operations. The tactical ones are easy to grasp: direct threats, pins, forks, deflection, etc. As for the strategical ones, we can distinguish between:

- a) improving our pieces;
- b) pawn play;
- c) exchanges;
- d) prophylaxis (with restriction and provocation).

The remainder of this book is structured around these subjects; for now let's just see a few related examples in practice.

Example 1
V. Chuchelov-Kir. Georgiev
Mainz (rapid) 2002

![Chess Board Diagram]
Improving our pieces
At first sight, White seems to be clearly better. All his pieces are active, the opponent has a weakness on a6, and the queenside pawn majority is an asset in any endgame. On top of this, the black forces are obstructed by the badly placed knight on e8.

21...g6!

Simple, yet very strong. Georgiev plans ...g7-f5 in order to improve his knight.

22 f1

A good square for the bishop, where it protects g2 and keeps watching the a6-pawn. In the event of 22 g5, fighting for the dark squares, Black could adjust his plans slightly by 22...g7 preparing ...f6, and the knight reaches a decent square anyway. Another, more enterprising option is 22 h8!? keeping intact the plan of ...g7-f5.

22...g7 23 e3?!

A strange tempo loss. The immediate 23 h3 seemed more natural, although after 23...f5 Black hardly has any problems anymore.

23...f5 24 h3 fd8

In just four moves, the situation on the board has changed noticeably. Thanks to his strong central control Black already holds the upper hand.

25 d3

The simple 25 xd8+ xd8 26 d1 might have been preferable. Now Black gains space, with tempo.

25...e5! 26 d2 e4 27 xd8+ xd8 28 f4 h5

A sensible move in order to back up the well-placed knight, which also has an enticing destiny on d4. Black went on to win the game. This is a simple example of how to improve one of our pieces and the possible virtues of such an operation, especially if it is our worst piece that is being improved!

Example 2
Cu.Hansen-J.Hellsten
Malmö 1996

Pawn play
Black just needs a few moves like ...d8, ...g7 and ...0-0 to achieve safety. However, it is White to move and he manages to alter the pawn structure to his benefit.

15 d5!

This advance has several virtues: it gets rid of the backward d4-pawn, destroys Black's protected square at d5, and, most importantly, creates a mobile pawn majority on the queenside.
15...cxd5

After 15...d8? 16 d6 the protected passed pawn is decisive in the long run. Even worse is 15...xc5? 16 xc5 wxc5 17 e1+ with the idea of 17...e7 18 d6.

16 wxd5 d7

Exchanges won’t remedy Black’s structural problems, but after 16...d8 17 wc4, followed by b2-b4 and a2-a4, White has a huge advantage.

17 ad1 wxd5 18 xdx5 e7

19 b4!

White’s plan is simple: convert the majority into a passed pawn. Black is unable to do the same thing on the kingside, due to the doubled f-pawns.

19...c8 20 fd1 c7 21 d2!

The knight is heading for the comfortable c4-square.

21...f5 22 c4 0-0

By playing 22...f4?! 23 d4 Black would just help the opponent in improving his pieces.

23 g3 g7 24 g2 d8 25 xdx8 xdx8 26 a4! (D)

Little by little White continues with his plan, whereas Black lacks counterplay. Hansen later won the game by bringing up his king. Evidently, the key to his success was 15 d5!, improving the pawn structure.

Example 3
A.Khalifman-M.Adams
Groningen 1990

Exchanges
The last move was 22 d2-e4 with the idea of swapping the strong enemy knight on c5.

22...f5!

The most tempting reply, and the best one as well! Black prepares to exchange his bishop for the white knight, so that his own, powerful knight will remain on the board.

23 c4 b3 24 wc1

By unpinning the knight White managed to avoid any tactical surprises; how-
ever, the opponent’s reply will leave him with a clear strategical inferiority.

White lost on time in a desperate position; for example, 40 a7+ d8 41 f7 c2 42 xg6 e4! wins. In conclusion, the exchange operation initiated by 22 f5 helped Black to reach a superior position of the “good knight vs. bad bishop” type, while the subsequent exchanges of major pieces proved useful in order to increase the advantage.

Example 4
E. Lobron-R. Dautov
Nussloch 1996

Prophylaxis, restriction and provocation
White has just played 27 d2-e2, with the probable intention of fe1 creating a mating threat.

27...g6!

A typical prophylactic measure. With ...g7 next, Black safeguards the king from any surprises along the back rank. Moreover, he takes the f5 and h5 squares from the white queen and knight.

28 fe1 g7

All of a sudden White has fallen short of active plans, whereas Black is waiting for the right moment to attack the b2-pawn.
29 Ng2 h5!
By setting up the positional threat of ...h5-h4, Black aims at provoking a weakness in the enemy camp.

30 h3
On the intended 30 Qe3 there could follow 30...h4! with attacking prospects. However, 30 h4 seemed like a safer way of defending the kingside, although in this case White would have to be on his guard against a potential ...Qxh4 sacrifice.

30...Nd6 31 Qf4?
The lesser evil was 31 Qe3, though after 31...c3 32 bxc3 Rxc3 33 Wa2 Wd7! (thanks to the provocation of h2-h3, Black gains a vital tempo) 34 Wh2 Wa4 Black enjoys a clear advantage – Dautov.

31...Nb6 32 Nb1 c3! 33 b4 a5 34 Ne4 Nxd8!

Now back to our revision of strategical concepts. Before leaving the strategical and tactical operations, the former of which we will return to soon, I would like to emphasize the link between tactics and strategy. Without using tactical weapons and preventing the opponent’s tactical threats, we won’t be able to conduct the strategical battle. Often a strategically superior position has to be realized in a concrete manner; i.e. at some moment we have to resort to tactics in order to impose our advantage. On other occasions, a tempting strategical plan can fail due to a simple tactical detail. Finally, by utilizing tactical resources in the position, we can reach minor strategical goals, such as the improvement of a specific piece. Let’s see an example that touches on several of these aspects.

Example 5
N.Short–L.Ljubojevic
Novi Sad Olympiad 1990

White managed to save the b-pawn, but now the second rank proves to be too vulnerable.

35 Be1 axb4 36 axb4 Nb4 37 Nb4 Wxb4 38 Ne4 Wb2 39 Ne2 Nd2!

White resigned. Evidently, the plan with ...g7-g6 and ...Qg7 not only neutralized the back rank threats, but also prevented enemy ideas such as Qh5 and Wf5. Another strong move was 29...h5 in order to provoke a weakening of White’s kingside. These methods are indeed typical in practice.

In this theoretical position Black aims at completing the queenside development by ...d7-c6, after which he would have a solid game thanks to the strong knight on e5. Now let us see how Short fights against this plan with all possible tactical means.
18 d5!

Supported by the line 18...exd5? 19 wxd5+ h8 20 xf8 mate, White improves his knight, which was not doing anything substantial on c3.

18...wd8 19 b6 ab8

Again Black is just one move away from 20 d7, so White hurries to create threats.

20 f4! d7

After 20...d7 21 xd7! (21 xe5 dx5 22 wxd7 wxb6+ 23 h1 h8! is less clear)
21...xd7 22 g4 Black is suffering on the light squares; e.g. 22...e8 23 c4 or 22...e5
23 d5+ h8 24 e3.

Probably 20...c6 was preferable, when 21 f2 g6 22 e2!? g7 23 c3, intending c4, keeps a pleasant edge for White.

21 c4!

Strategically speaking, this is the desired move, since any exchange would help Black to liberate himself. However, before making it Short had to establish that neither 21...e5 nor 21...d5 would work against him.

21 d5

Or 21...e5?! 22 w5+ h8 23 e3 with a huge edge.

22 h1!

Parrying the threat of 22...c5. It also transpires that 22...dxc4 loses the exchange after 23 xb8.

22...c5 23 wd2 a8

24 f7+!

A new tactical twist that helps improve the bishop before grabbing the pawn.

24...h8 25 exd5 b5 26 a5!

Preventing 26 b7.

26...f8 27 e5!

With the strong threat of 28 xg7+ xg7 29 c3+.

27...g6 28 xg6 hxg6 29 b4 f8 30 d6

White has an enormous advantage and soon won the game. Please note that the bishop on c8 hasn’t moved yet! It is less probable that White would have reached his main objective – prevention of Black’s queenside development – without such a heavy use of tactical arms.
Now we should move on with more concepts of strategy. Alongside the strategical operations we have positional elements such as material, weak squares, space, passed pawns, files, diagonals, etc. One important task during the game is to evaluate which of these elements hold most significance. Let’s see an example.

Example 6
I.Sokolov-J.Emms
Hastings 1998/99

13...\( \text{Q} \text{bd7} \) 14 \( \text{W} \text{c2} \) \( \text{d5} \)?

A tempting counter-strike directed at the king on e1. However, it soon transpires that it is the black king who will suffer from the opening of lines. Considerable safer was 14...\( \text{Q} \text{f8} \) 15 f5 \( \text{Q} \text{h8} \) 16 fxe6 fxe6 with just a slight advantage for White – Ftcnik.

15 f5! exf5 16 \( \text{W} \text{xf5} \) dxc4 17 \( \text{A} \text{xc4} \)

Now it becomes evident that the a2-g8 diagonal is a much more relevant factor than the e-file, since the white king could hide on f1 at any moment, whereas Black has no light-squared bishop that can challenge the enemy on c4.

17...\( \text{g} \)6

Definitely not 17...\( \text{Q} \text{a3+?} \) 18 \( \text{Q} \text{f1} \) \( \text{Q} \text{xb2} \) 19 \( \text{Q} \text{d5} \); but 17...\( \text{Q} \text{f8!?} \) again made sense, e.g. 18 \( \text{Q} \text{f1} \) \( \text{W} \text{c8} \) 19 \( \text{W} \text{d3} \) \( \text{Q} \text{e6} \) and Black defends much better than in the game.

18 \( \text{W} \text{f3} \) \( \text{W} \text{c7} \) 19 \( \text{B} \text{b3} \) \( \text{W} \text{xh2} \)?!

More natural was 19...\( \text{W} \text{f8+} \) 20 \( \text{Q} \text{f1} \) \( \text{g} \)7, although at this point both 21 \( \text{Q} \text{b5} \) and 21 \( \text{Q} \text{d5} \) spell trouble for Black.

20 \( \text{W} \text{h1} \) \( \text{W} \text{c7} \) 21 \( \text{Q} \text{f1} \)

Securing the king and preparing 22 \( \text{Q} \text{e1} \). From now on, White’s attack plays itself.

21...\( \text{W} \text{d8} \) 22 \( \text{Q} \text{e1} \) \( \text{f8} \)

Parrying the threat of 23 \( \text{Q} \text{d5}! \) \( \text{Q} \text{xd5} \) 24 \( \text{W} \text{xd5} \) with a deadly attack on f7.

23 \( \text{Q} \text{a4} \! \! \! \! \! \! \)

Setting up the threat of 24 \( \text{Q} \text{xd7} \).

23...\( \text{b5} \) 24 \( \text{Q} \text{xb5} \) \( \text{Q} \text{b8} \) 25 \( \text{Q} \text{xd7} \) \( \text{W} \text{xd7} \) 26 \( \text{Q} \text{xe7!} \) \( \text{W} \text{xe7} \) 27 \( \text{Q} \text{xf6} \) \( \text{W} \text{e6} \) 28 d5 \( \text{W} \text{a6+} \) 29 \( \text{Q} \text{g2} \) \( \text{Q} \text{b6} \) 30 \( \text{Q} \text{e4} \)

In this desperate position, Black resigned. In conclusion, White’s control of the a2-g8 diagonal and his active bishop pair were decisive factors in this game.
What about planning in chess? Well, this is quite a tricky matter since the opponent might put up obstacles to our plans at any moment. Only in very superior positions, with the opponent deprived of any activity, does a detailed plan make sense. In the majority of cases, we should rather concentrate on finding the appropriate strategical and tactical operations, and adjust these according to the opponent’s play. Of course, this doesn’t exclude keeping general directions at mind, such as “attack on the kingside”, “advance the queenside pawn majority”, or “exchange pieces”. Let’s see an example.

**Example 7**

I.Sokolov-U.Andersson
Reggio Emilia 1988/89

![Chessboard Diagram]

23...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}8!

Wisely enough, Black prevents the enemy plan. A light-hearted reply like 23...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}d8? permits 24 h4!, when 24...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}xh4? 25 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{x}}}xg7+! \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}xg7 26 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}f6+}} followed by 27 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{h}}}h6(+)} is terminal for Black. On the other hand, an active defence with 23...f6? would have failed to 24 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}xg6! hxg6} (or 24...fxe5 25 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}h4 transposing}) 25 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{x}}}xg6 fx e5 26 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}h4} with a decisive attack.

In effect, White’s attack was stopped by the accurate 23...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}d8}, so what should he do now?

24 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{g}}}g5!}

The beginning of a new plan: swap the dark-squared bishops and transfer the knight to the outpost on d6.

24...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}xg5}

Possibly a better choice was 24...f6 25 exf6 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}xf6} in order to put an end to the enemy plan, although after 26 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}e3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}f7 27 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}e4 White keeps the initiative.}}

25 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{h}}}xg5 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}d8}}

Before doubling rooks on the d-file, Andersson brings the queen closer to the kingside.

26 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}e3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}e7 27 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{e}}}e4 b6}}

The immediate 27...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}fd8} gives White the additional option of 28 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}c5?} with an even stronger plan: swap on e6 and attack with the bishop along the a2-g8 diagonal. After 28...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}c7 29 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{b}}}xe6 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}xe6 30 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{h}}}b3 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{w}}}e7 31 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}f1}}, followed by 32 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{g}}}f5, Black is in trouble.

28 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}f1}

By keeping the knight on e4 for one more move, Sokolov maintains the option of \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}f6+.

28...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{f}}}fd8}

If 28...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}d5, with the idea of 29 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{c}}}xd6?? \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{x}}}xd6, then White could again deviate from his original plan with 29 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{g}}}g3! heading for f5.}}

29 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}d6
Mission accomplished. On d6 the knight not just controls a variety of key squares (such as f7 and f5), it also interferes with the opponent's main idea, an attack on the d4-pawn. If these circumstances are maintained, then White could start over again with the attack.

29...\texttt{Nxd6}!

This sacrifice is probably Black's best shot. On 29...f6? 30 \texttt{Nh5} fxe5 31 dxe5 intending \texttt{Nxh7} and/or \texttt{We4}, with a strong attack. Not much better is 29...c5?! due to 30 dxc5 bxc5 31 \texttt{Wg3}! resuming the idea of h4-h5. At this point both 31...h6 and 31...f6 permit a strong sacrifice on g6, while 31...\texttt{Wf8} 32 h4 \texttt{Dxe5} 33 \texttt{Dxe4!} is equally decisive.

30 exd6 \texttt{Nxd6} 31 \texttt{Hg3}

Thanks to his slight material edge and active pieces, White holds a stable edge. The next plan might be b2-b4, \texttt{He4} and \texttt{Mc1} in order to attack the weak c6-pawn. In this whole example we can notice the flexibility with which White executed his plans.

Another important concept within chess strategy is the so-called \textit{typical positions}. Here I am referring to those with a similar pawn structure and piece configuration, although the involved set-ups (the location of some of the pawns and pieces) may differ from case to case. For example, in the above fragment Short-Ljubojevic we came across a typical Sicilian position. The study of games that lead to typical positions is essential in order to learn openings properly, since it helps us to master the related plans in the middlegame, and acquire a "feeling" for the opening.

\textit{Technique} is a term used frequently when referring to the realization of an advantage without allowing the opponent any chances of counterplay. Furthermore, good technique is often related to the attention on small details in the position.

By now we have arrived at two important concepts: initiative and dynamics. By initiative I refer to some kind of major influence on the battle, without necessarily being an advantage in itself. The side that possesses the initiative has a greater liberty when it comes to the choice of actions, whereas his opponent is mainly reduced to defensive tasks. Later on, the initiative can be converted into an advantage, or it can disappear. Let's see an example.

\textbf{Example 8}

\textit{Y.Seirawan-G.Sosonko}

Bad Kissingen 1981

\begin{center}
\textbf{\includegraphics[width=0.3\textwidth]{example8}}
\end{center}
White is slightly better due to the badly placed black king that obstructs the rook on a8. He should now create some activity before Black manages to coordinate his forces.

13 h3!

Seirawan prepares g4-g5 in order to gain space and access to the e4-square for his knight. Stereotypical play with 13 d2?! promises less after 13...f8 14 xf8 xf8 15 hd1 c7 16 d6 e6, followed by ...ad8, and Black has no major problems.

13...h5

Now after 13...f8 14 xf8 xf8 15 g4 e6 16 g5 d7 17 g4! White obtains some advantage – Cvetkovic. White also gains the upper hand in the event of 13...h6 14 g4 e6 15 d6! e8 16 e7 followed by e4. With 13...h5 Black instead aims at preventing the g2-g4 advance, and would indeed succeed after the slow 14 hg1?! h4. However, White has a much stronger move, which allows him to seize the initiative.

14 g4 hxg4 15 hxg4

This pawn sacrifice is mainly based on the fact that the clearance of the h-file favours White, due to the disconnected black rooks.

15...xg4

After 15...xg4 16 xh8+ xh8 17 h1 f6 18 h7! the black kingside comes under strong pressure.

16 xh8+ xh8 17 e7!

Generally speaking, the side that possesses the initiative should play actively, creating new threats whenever possible. Here Black is faced with the double threat of 18 d8+ and 18 xf6.

17...d7 18 h1 g7 19 xf6!

In order to keep up the pressure White needs to bring his knight into the game. The bishop pair matters less.

19...xf6 20 e4 d8 21 h7!

Seizing the seventh rank and creating new threats. The materialistic 21 d6+! c7 22 xf7 promises less due to 22...f6 23 h7 g8!, followed by ...g7, and the initiative starts to evaporate.

21...e8

Or 21...e6 22 c5! f5 23 e4! b6 24 exf5 bxc5 25 fxg6 fxg6 26 f3 with a considerable advantage despite the minus pawn.

22 g4+ c7

Obviously 22...f5?? failed to 23 d6+ with mate.

23 e6! e7 24 xf7 xf7 25 xf7 d7 26 g7

Finally White has managed to convert his initiative into something more tangible: a superior endgame. The knight outshines the bishop, the rook is well placed on g7, and Black has weak pawns on the g6- and e5-squares.

26...e6 27 d1!

After 27 xg6+? f5 28 g7 xe4 (not 28...a3+? 29 d2 xe4 30 f7! intending mate) 29 xe7 f8! Black gets some counterplay for the pawn. Seirawan prefers a more technical path, simply bringing up the king.

27...f8 28 e2 f7 29 g8

Heading for b8 in order to provoke new weaknesses. White later won.
Dynamics is another frequently used term in chess literature, and one that can be interpreted in different ways. I regard it as a force that changes the long-term characteristics of a position. This force is closely related to pawn play and exchanges, since these are the only irreversible actions in the game – after any pawn move or exchange, the position never becomes the same (compare the 50 moves rule). In concrete terms, pawn moves (some more than others) let new elements appear, such as open files, passed pawns and weak squares. In other words, dynamic play is the one that creates something “new” in the position. Let’s see an example.

Example 9
K.Sasikiran-A.Iljushin
FIDE World Cup, Khanty Mansiysk 2005

![Chess Diagram]

In this structure known as the Stonewall, Black deliberately leaves a weak square on e5, but in return gains control of the light squares, in particular e4.

12 h5!

A useful pawn advance that prevents ...g7-g5 and creates a weak square on g6, which can soon be occupied by a knight. Moreover, the fact that the g6 and e5 squares are at a knight jump’s distance is rather practical for White.

12...f6

Black should probably avoid 12...e6?! due to 13 e5 followed by g6; however, the restrictive 12...e8?! intending 13 h4? hxh5 was worth consideration.

13 e3

Due to Black’s previous move White must protect the d4-pawn before moving the knight towards g6.

13...a4 14 h4 b6

Black’s play is logical as well. By attacking the c4-pawn he asks the opponent to define his centre, for example by 15 xxe4 fxe4 16 c5, when 16...d7 followed by 17 e8 gets him closer to the desired e6-e5 advance. On the other hand, 15 b3 would clear the a-file for the black rook. However, there is a third, stronger option.

15 xe4!

Sasikiran swaps the rather passive bishop for the active enemy knight. Regarding his own knight on d2, its mission will be revealed two moves later.

15...fxe4 16 g6 e8 17 f3!

White adjusts the pawn structure so that the other knight gets into play. Moreover, he clears the b1-h7 diagonal for the queen. This key move had to be executed at this very moment – after, for example, 17 c5?! d7 18 f3 e5! Black takes over.

17...exf3 18 c5 d7?!

In a closed position such as this one, 18...f2+? 19 xf2 hardly makes any sense. But 18...c4!? was a more active choice; e.g. 19 xf3 (avoiding 19 xc4 dxc4 20 xc4 b6! with counterplay) 19...b6 20 b3 axb3 21 axb3 a5 and Black has far more play than in the game.

19 xf3 b6 20 cxb6 xb6 21 0-0!
White avoids 21 \( \text{wx} c6?! \text{d}7 \) followed by ...\( \text{c}4 \) with counterplay.

21...\( \text{a}6 \) 22 \( \text{f}2 \) \( \text{b}5 \) 23 \( \text{fe}5 \)

A last aspect of strategy is the rhythm of the position. Imagine that one player possesses a far advanced passed pawn, or a strong attack. In such positions the play tends to become sharp and tactically complex, where one single slip might lead to defeat. We saw an example in Sokolov-Emms above. Conversely, in more balanced positions, such as in the previous example, the spirit of the battle is a bit different. The game becomes slower, with both players carefully choosing between different strategical operations, evaluating what are the most important elements in the position, etc. In conclusion, our way of playing has to be in accordance with the rhythm of the position – we shouldn’t lose our patience in the slow ones, nor neglect the dangers and complexities of the quicker ones.

Finally, I would like to show you one of my own games, in which many of the preceding concepts are reflected.

**Example 10**

J. Hellsten-M. Olesen
Malmö 1997

**Benoni Defence (A43)**

1 \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 2 \( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 3 \( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{ex}d5 \) 4 \( \text{c}xd5 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 5 \( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{e}7 \)

With 5...\( \text{f}6 \), followed by 6...\( \text{g}6 \) and 7...\( \text{g}7 \), Black would have entered the main pathways of the Benoni Defence.

6 \( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{g}6 \)

The set-up with ...\( \text{g}6 \) has its pros and cons, compared to the mainstream Benoni. Black increases his control of the important e5-square, thus complicating one of White’s key ideas in this opening, the e4-e5 advance. On the other hand, the dark-
squared bishop is deployed less actively on e7.

7 g3

7 e4 is perfectly possible, but the fianchetto has its logic too. The g3-pawn takes the h4 and f4 squares from the enemy knight, whereas the e4-square remains accessible for a white knight, an idea that might come handy if Black later moves the bishop to f6.

7...e7 8 g2 0-0 9 0-0 a6

Black initiates a standard plan in this structure: ...b7-b5, advancing the queenside pawn majority.

10 a3

White resorts to another typical plan in the Benoni: 11 b1 and 12 b4, gaining space and preventing ...b5-b4. Another, perhaps more promising option is 10 d2, followed by a2-a4 and c4, in order to improve the king's knight.

10...d7 11 b1 c4

Thus Black prepares ...c5 and also neutralizes the b2-b4 advance, since 12 b4?! is now met by 12...cxb3 ensuring the c5-square for the knight. On the minus side, the c-pawn becomes a little loose, and White gains access to the d4-square.

Let's check Black's other options. On 11...b5?! there follows 12 b4 intending

12...c4 13 d4 and White gains the upper hand. The paradoxical 11...f5!? makes more sense: after 12 e4 d7 Black has managed to provoke e2-e4, which means that White can no longer use the e4-square for his pieces, whereas the e4-pawn might soon turn into a target for the enemy forces, after moves like ...e8 and ...f6.

There is also 11...c8, getting on with development and complicating the b2-b4 advance. Z.Gyimesi-L.Seres, Balatonbereny 1997, continued 12 d2 e8! (avoiding 12...f6 13 e4 13 b4 cxb4 14 axb4 e6 with a comfortable game for Black. Perhaps White could try the odd 13 h4!? instead, intending g5 as well as h4-h5.

12 e3

Heading for the promising d4-square and preparing to meet 12...c5?! with 13 xc5 dxc5 14 d6.

12...a5

Black develops the queen and strengthens the c5-square.

13 d4 fc8

Black continues with preparatory actions, aware that 13...c5?! is still premature due to 14 d2 intending 14...b5 15 xc5 dxc5 16 d6.

14 d2 b5

Finally Black is ready to go 15...c5. He
would then retreat the queen to d8 in preparation for a queenside advance with ...a7-a5 and ...b5-b4. How should White react to this plan?

15 f4!

A powerful thrust that creates new opportunities on the kingside. White now threatens f5-f6 in order to soften up the f6-square, while e4-e5, seizing the centre, might also come into consideration.

15 e4!? is less flexible due to 15...\(\Box\)c5 16 f4 \(\Box\)d3 with counterplay, but 15 b4!? also made sense, with a fight for the queenside. After 15...\(\Box\)xb3 (not 15...\(\Box\)xa3? 16 \(\Box\)a1 \(\Box\)xb4 17 \(\Box\)xa6 etc) 16 \(\Box\)xb3 \(\Box\)d8! followed by ...\(\Box\)f6, there are chances for both sides.

15...f6

Preventing the f5-f6 plan once and for all, at the cost of weakening the light squares and restricting the bishop on e7. However, the alternatives all lead to trouble for Black:

a) 15...f5?! invites 16 e4! intending \(\Box\)h3, with excellent attacking prospects.

b) 15...\(\Box\)d8, covering the f6-square, is well met by 16 f5 \(\Box\)e5 (or 16...\(\Box\)f8 17 f6! \(\Box\)xf6 18 \(\Box\)xf6! gxf6 19 \(\Box\)de4 with a strong attack) 17 \(\Box\)xe5 dxe5 18 \(\Box\)de4 with a clear edge. The e4-square is ideal for the knight, from where it limits Black’s counterplay and supports a future d5-d6 or f5-f6.

c) 15...\(\Box\)c5 is the move that Black would like to make, but this runs into the strong continuation 16 f5 \(\Box\)e5 (16...\(\Box\)f8 again fails to 17 f6!) 17 \(\Box\)xe5 dxe5 18 d6! \(\Box\)g5 (or 18...\(\Box\)xd6? 19 \(\Box\)xa8 \(\Box\)xa8 20 \(\Box\)xc4! bxc4 21 \(\Box\)xd6 winning) 19 \(\Box\)xa8 \(\Box\)xa8 20 \(\Box\)f3 \(\Box\)e3+ 21 \(\Box\)g2. White isn’t just an exchange up, he also has a dangerous passed pawn, along with several strong threats such as 22 \(\Box\)xe5, 22 \(\Box\)d5 and 22 \(\Box\)d5.

After 15...f6 White has to forget about a direct kingside attack and, instead, focus on the new weaknesses in Black’s camp. As a consequence, the game slows down and becomes strategically more complex.

16 \(\Box\)h1

A prophylactic measure in conjunction to my next move, which will expose the g1-a7 diagonal.

16...\(\Box\)c5

Finally the knight reaches its destiny. The ambitious 16...\(\Box\)d8, intending ...\(\Box\)b6, fails to 17 b4! forcing the queen to retreat.

17 \(\Box\)xc5!

It might appear illogical to swap the “good” bishop, but this exchange has several virtues. White gets rid of the opponent’s most active piece, the knight on c5. Moreover, after ...f7-f6 has been played, the d4-square is in fact more useful to a knight, where it can access the weaknesses on c6, e6 and f5. Finally, if we imagine a later exchange of the light-squared bishops, as well as of a pair of knights, then White would reach a “good knight vs. bad bishop” scenario. We already came across this topic in the Sasikiran-Iljushin fragment (p. 23).

17...\(\Box\)xc5 18 \(\Box\)f3 \(\Box\)b6 19 \(\Box\)d4

White now enjoys a pleasant edge thanks to his light square control. In retrospect, please note that he would probably not have reached such a favourable situation without
playing 15 f4, whose tactical potential (cf. the 15...走得相子 Line) convinced Black to weaken his structure by 15...f6. Again, tactics at the service of strategy.

19...走得相子?!

19...a5 was preferable, speeding up the queenside play, although after 20 走e4 b4 21 走a4 走xa4 22 走xa4 White keeps the better chances.

20 走e4!

Intending 21 走f5 in order to swap the opponents “good” bishop.

20...Dictionary走c8 21 走f5 走xf5 22 走xf5 走f8?

Again Black should have resorted to 22...a5 with the idea of ...b5-b4. As a general piece of advice, in inferior positions one should hurry to create even the most minimal counterplay.

27 走a2!

Improving the knight in the swiftest way. Now that 27...a5 is unavailable (for this reason, 26...走b6 was preferable), Black can’t stop the 走b4-c6 manoeuvre.

27...走e7 28 走b4 走a8 29 走b6 走d8 30 走g2 走b6?

Black should have exchanged one of the powerful knights by 30...走e7, even though after 31 走xe7 走xe7 32 走h3 White keeps a clear advantage. In the game the bishop soon proves to be useless on b6 anyway.

31 走f5 走f8

32 走g4!

White can finally convert his positional advantage into a direct kingside attack.

32...走e6?

Desperation, but it was already too late for a satisfactory defence; e.g. 32...h6 33 走g5 breaking through, or 32...g6 33 走h6+ followed by 34 g5 and possibly 35 e5 with a crushing attack.

33 走f5 走g5 34 走xe6 走xc6 35 走xg5 g6

Both 35...走b7 and 35...走a7 are met by 36 e7 renewing the threats.

36 走f6! gxf5 37 走g1+ 走g1 38 走g1 mate

In the following chapters we will continue the revision of these strategical concepts.
Chapter Two

Improving the Pieces

In this chapter we will study in more detail how to improve our pieces. On several occasions we will observe the cooperation between two or more pieces, for example rook and queen or the bishop pair.

The bishop

In all phases of the game, we should constantly search for ideal diagonals for our bishops. Since the bishop is able to move rapidly from one flank to another, its range can be drastically improved in a few moves.

We will start with some examples where one player seizes one of the long diagonals. The fact that these cross the whole board turns out to be more important than one might perhaps initially think.

Example 11
A.Bujakevich-L.Kritz
Moscow 1996

Already in the opening we are faced with the choice of diagonals for our bish-

ops. In the diagram position White is about to develop his remaining bishop. Ideas like 12 \( \text{g}5 \), or perhaps 12 f3 followed by \( \text{e}3 \), come to mind. However, there is another, more powerful diagonal.

12 \( \text{b}3! \)

Intending \( \text{b}2 \) in order to seize the long diagonal, which is of great importance when there are no central pawns on it.

12...\( \text{e}8 \)

If Black tries to challenge the enemy bishop by 12...\( \text{g}4 \) preparing ...\( \text{f}6 \), then White has 13 \( \text{d}5! \) c6 14 \( \text{b}2 \) with strong
pressure. A more careful way of launching the previous plan is 12...c6! 13 d2 e8. Here White could try 14 d1 e6 (not 14...f6? 15 e5!) 15 fe1 f6 16 d2 with a slight edge, although Black probably has less trouble than in the game.

13 b2 f8

14 d1

White slowly reinforces his position, aware that the opponent can’t undertake any active measures, e.g. 14...g6? 15 d5!

14...c6 15 fe1 a6 16 f3 d8

After 16...b5?! 17 d5! xdx5 18 cxd5 followed by c1, Black ends up with a bad structure.

17 h1 d7 18 e2 e6 19 f4 e8 20 g4!

Finally White is ready for concrete action. The immediate threat is 21 g5 trapping the knight.

20...h6 21 g1

Preparing g4-g5, with a strong attack. Evidently, the bishop is well placed for this purpose on b2. Not surprisingly, there are entire opening systems based on the deployment of a bishop on the long diagonal, such as the Catalan and the Grünfeld.

Example 12

Z.Efimenko-V.Neverov
Ukrainian Championship, Rivne 2005

In open positions with pawns on both flanks the bishop tends to outshine the knight. Here White also commands the open d-file, and the black queenside pawns are weak. How to progress?

30...e2!

The bishop is regrouped to the long diagonal, where it will control more squares.

30...c6

Heading for c7 in order to protect the seventh rank. In the event of 30...f6, intending 31 f3 b4, White has 31 a5! b4 32 d6 with strong pressure on the a6-pawn.
31 \textit{We5}

No hurry. Efimenko lets his bishop glance at the a6-pawn for one more move, while improving the queen.
31...\textit{Qf6} 32 \textit{Qf3} \textit{Cc7} 33 \textit{Qd6!}

Activating the rook and creating the threat of 34 \textit{Xxa6}.
33...\textit{Qd7} 34 \textit{Cc3} c4

Now there arises a strong passed pawn; however, Black lacked a good defence against 35 \textit{WC4} or 35 \textit{Wa5}.
35 b4 \textit{Qf6} 36 \textit{Wd4} \textit{Md7} 37 \textit{Xxd7} \textit{Qxd7}

After the alternative 37...\textit{Wxd7}? 38 \textit{Wxd7} \textit{Qxd7} 39 \textit{Le2} \textit{Cb6} 40 a5 \textit{Qd5} 41 c3! White soon wins – Ribli.
38 \textit{Wd6} \textit{Qf6}

\textbf{39 b5!}

Passed pawns should advance, as the old saying goes. Instead, the game continued 39 \textit{Wc6}?! \textit{Wd8} 40 \textit{Wa8}! \textit{Xxa8} 41 \textit{Xxa8} with a very superior endgame that Efimenko went on to win without any problems. But the advance with the b-pawn wins practically on the spot.
39...\textit{axb5} 40 \textit{axb5} \textit{Wd7}

One of several insufficient ways of fighting against the passed pawn.
41 \textit{Wb8+} \textit{Sh7} 42 b6

There will inevitably follow 43 b7, with an easy win.

\textbf{Example 13}

\textbf{S. Gligoric-W. Unzicker}

European Team Championship, Bath 1973

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

White enjoys some positional advantage due to his superior pawn structure – there are weak points on e5 and e6. Moreover, his own pawns on e4 and f3 restrict the enemy pieces. How should he move on?

\textbf{27 b3!}

Gligoric prepares the transfer of his dark-squared bishop to the long diagonal, where it will become quite strong in the absence of a black f-pawn.
27...\textit{Af8} 28 \textit{Cc1} \textit{Wf8}

After 28...\textit{e5}?! 29 \textit{b2} the pawn becomes exposed on e5. A more aggressive option is 28...\textit{Qh5}?! intending 29 \textit{b2}?! \textit{Wg5}! with counterplay. White could try 29 \textit{Qe2} instead, in order to swap rooks before continuing his plan.
29 \textit{Qb2} \textit{h6} 30 \textit{Qg2} \textit{Qg8} 31 \textit{Qe5}!

Seizing the bishop pair.
31...\textit{xe5} 32 \textit{xe5} \textit{Qe7}

Preparing 33...\textit{Cc6} followed by ...\textit{e6-e5} and ...\textit{Cc6-d4}, but the opponent is alert.
33 \textit{b5}! \textit{Qd5}?!?

After 33...\textit{Xxd1} 34 \textit{Xxd1} White keeps a
clear advantage due to his active pieces, so Black tries to complicate the game.

34 \textit{\textbf{Wc1!}}

Gligoric has noticed that it is worth the exchange to launch a strong attack. Much less was promised by 34 Ede1?! b4 and a black rook enters on d2.

34...\textit{\textbf{Qe3+} 35 Wxe3 Exd1} 36 Exd1 Exd1 37 Wxh6+ \textit{\textbf{Qh7}} 38 Qc4

The other bishop joins in and Black is helpless.

38...\textit{\textbf{Wf7}} 39 Qxe6 \textit{\textbf{Wg6}} 40 \textit{\textbf{Qf4}} Ed8

Or 40...\textit{\textbf{Wxe6}} 41 \textit{\textbf{Wf8+}} Wg8 42 Qxg7 mate.

41 Qf7!

Black resigned in view of 41...\textit{\textbf{Wc6}} 42 Wg5 or 41...\textit{\textbf{Qd2+}} 42 Qh3.

Now let’s continue with some other diagonals, such as h3-c8, h2-b8 and their equivalents on the other flank.

19 \textit{\textbf{Qc1!}}

Heading for the a3-f8 diagonal, where there is no black counterpart.

19...\textit{\textbf{g6}}

Preparing 20...\textit{\textbf{Qh7}} in order to swap the strong knight on g5.

20 \textit{\textbf{a3}} \textit{\textbf{Qh7}} 21 \textit{\textbf{Qf3!}}

A logical retreat, by which White retains the knight for future attacking purposes and leaves its counterpart badly placed on h7.

21...\textit{\textbf{Wd8}}

On 21...0-0 there could follow 22 \textit{\textbf{Wd2}} Qg7 23 \textit{\textbf{Qe1}} intending Qg2-f4, in preparation for a kingside attack. In the game, Black prefers quite a different destiny for his king.

22 \textit{\textbf{Wd2}} \textit{\textbf{d7?!}} 23 \textit{\textbf{Qf1}} \textit{\textbf{Qf5}} 24 \textit{\textbf{Qc5}} Qc6

In order to construct some kind of fortress on the queenside.

25 \textit{\textbf{Wc1!}}

\begin{center}
\textit{Example 14}
L.Stein-S.Schweber
Mar del Plata 1966
\end{center}

\begin{center}

\textit{It is the queen’s turn to exploit the a3-f8 diagonal.}

25...\textit{\textbf{Qg8?}}

Perhaps Black was expecting the natural 26 \textit{\textbf{Wa3}}, but White has a much stronger option that will produce a decisive attack. The immediate 25...\textit{\textbf{Wa5}} was called for.

26 \textit{\textbf{Qxa4!}} bxa4 27 \textit{\textbf{Wa3}} \textit{\textbf{Wa5}} 28 \textit{\textbf{Qxf5}} Qgb8

On 28...gxg5 there follows 29 Qe7!
threatening mate, and after 29...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qg7}}} 30 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qxd8 Qxd8}}} 31 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qb4}}} Black is finished.

\textbf{29 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qxb8 Qxb8}}} 30 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qh3}}} }

White later realized his material advantage.

\textbf{Example 15}
E.Raaste-V.Yemelin
St. Petersburg 1996

![Chess Diagram]

42 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qh2 Qf6}}}
Increasing the pressure on the e4-pawn and creating the threat of 43...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qxd2}}}! 44 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qxd2 Qf3+}}}.

43 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qf3}}}
By counterattacking the e5-pawn White is able to keep the material balance. However, the fact that the h1-a8 diagonal is cleared will soon play against him.

43...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qxe4}}} 44 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qxe4 Qxe4}}} 45 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qxe5 Qa8}}}

Black is better thanks to his space advantage and more actively placed pieces. He now launches a strong bishop manoeuvre that will step up the pressure.

\textbf{36...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qe7!}}}}
Intending \ldots\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qd8-b6}}} in order to seize the g1-a7 diagonal. Also interesting was 36...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qh7!}}} intending \ldots\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qh6}}}, but the text is more aggressive.

\textbf{37 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qe2}}}}
It is not easy for White to improve his pieces; e.g. 37 \textit{\textit{\texttt{We2 Qd8}}} 38 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qe3? Qxe4}}}.

\textbf{37...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qd8}}} 38 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qg1 Qb6}}} 39 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qe2 Qg7}}} }

In such a superior position, Black has time for a few useful moves.

\textbf{40 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qh4 Wd8}}} 41 \textit{\textit{\texttt{Qg2 Qg5!}}}}
Before White plays h3-h4. Now 42 h4? is impossible due to 42...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qh3+}}} snatching the f2-pawn.

\textbf{Example 16}
E.Gufeld-A.Kolarov
Odessa 1968

![Chess Diagram]

Black maintains the strong bishop, thus creating several strong threats, such as 46...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qxf2}}}!, 46...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qe7}}} and 46...\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qa2}}}.

\textbf{46 f3 Qe7!}
This intermediate move destroys the white defence.

\textbf{47 Qg6 fxg6} 48 fxe4 Qxe4 49 Qc2 Qxe1 50 Qxe1 h4!
A final power move, that leaves the white king without shelter.

\textbf{51 Qc1 Qd5} 52 Qg2 hxg3+
In view of 53 Qxg3 Qf3+ 54 Qh2 Qf2, White resigned.

\textit{\textit{\texttt{Qd5+}}}

Here the choice of diagonals takes place
in a slower position. White is slightly better thanks to the two bishops; however, only one of them is active at this moment.

20h4!

A typical idea in structures with a kingside fianchetto. White plans h3 in order to seize the h3-c8 diagonal, thus exploiting the absence of a light-squared bishop in the black camp. If Black tries to prevent this manoeuvre by ...d7 or ...c8 at any moment, then simply h2 renews the idea.

20...xd1+ 21 xd1 d8 22 a5 c8 23 h3

The bishops are cooperating very well, at this moment creating an indirect threat towards a7.

23...a6

Black parries the threat but also fixes his

pawns on light squares, where they can be attacked by the enemy bishop later on.

23...d6! 24 x7 x4 seems more active, although after 25 b6 xd1+ 26 x1 White keeps an edge.

24 xd8

White temporarily hands over the d-file in order to advance the queenside pawns, since the immediate 24 c4? failed to 24...xd1+ 25 xd1 xb4.

24...xd8 25 c4 e7

Now on 25...d6 White has the strong 26 d3! (threatening to win the knight) 26...c7 27 c5 b5 28 d7l and the game is soon decided by a bishop move to c8.

26 f1!

A common prophylactic measure in endgames with major pieces. White would like to improve his queen, but first he must cover the entry square on d1, a task that he now assigns to the king.

26...g7 27 e2 h6 28 c3 d6 29 f4!

By this strong advance White opens up a second front on the kingside.

29 f6 30 c5 c7 31 fxe5 fxe5

On 31...xe5 there follows 32 xe5 fxe5 33 xe7l xe7 34 c5 with 35 c8 to follow.

32 f3!

Intending 32 e6 with deadly threats.

32 d8 33 e6 e8 34 d6!
The virtues of the f2-f4 advance are easily appreciated: the e5-pawn and the e6-square have turned into weaknesses.

34...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{Wh}}}}7 35 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{Wf}}}}6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{Dg}}}}8 36 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{Ax}}}}\textit{\textbf{\textit{gg}}8+} \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{Ax}}}}\textit{\textbf{\textit{gg}}8 37 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{Ax}}}}\textit{\textbf{\textit{xe}}}}5

Finally White’s positional advantage is converted into a material one.

37...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{h}}}}5 38 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}5 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{h}}}}6 39 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{W}}}}\textit{\textbf{\textit{h}}}8+ \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}7 40 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{Wx}}}}\textit{\textbf{\textit{h}}}6 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{Wxe}}}}5 41 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{Wf}}}}4+

The ensuing pawn endgame is easily won.

\textit{Example 17}

\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{H.Ree-L.Portisch}}}

Wijk aan Zee 1968

There has just been a queen exchange on d1 and one might get the impression that the game is entering peaceful waters. However, Portisch now initiates active measures in which his light-squared bishop will play a crucial role.

\textbf{7...\textbf{b}}6!

Considering that White is eager to play c2-c3 to secure his king on c2, Black hurries to put the bishop on the f1-a6 diagonal, where it will touch the key square on d3.

\textbf{8 \textbf{c}}3?!

After seeing the game, you will probably share my anxious feelings about this natural move! One try to do without it: 8 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{h}}}}3 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{a}}}}6 9 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{e}}}}3 0-0-0+ 10 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{Db}}}}2 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}6 11 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}1 intending b2-b3 and \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{B}}}}b2, with much safer play than in the game.

\textbf{8...\textbf{a}}6 9 \textbf{f}1

White tries to swap the dangerous enemy bishop. 9 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}2 0-0-0 10 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}1 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{b}}}}7! reaches similar play.

\textbf{9...0-0-0+ 10 \textbf{bd}2 \textbf{b}7!}

Very strong. After having displaced its colleague, the bishop shifts to the long diagonal, where it will put pressure on the e4-pawn.

\textbf{11 \textbf{c}2 \textbf{f}6 12 \textbf{d}3}

An awkward square for the bishop; however, both 12 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{h}}}}3? \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{xe}}}}4! 13 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{xe}}}}4 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{b}}}}4+, regaining the piece with interest, and 12 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\textit{g}}}}2?! \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{g}}}}4! 13 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{f}}}}1 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{a}}}}6! 14 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{c}}}}4 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{\textit{b}}}}4+, heading for d3, were highly unpleasant for White.

\textbf{12...\textbf{h}6 13 \textbf{xe}1 \textbf{g}5!}

Black continues with active play. He now intends ...\textbf{g}5-\textbf{g}4 followed by ...\textbf{e}5, an idea familiar to us from the Seirawan-Sosonko game (p. 21).

\textbf{14 \textbf{h}3 \textbf{g}4 15 \textbf{hxg}4 \textbf{e}5 16 \textbf{f}1 \textbf{h}5!}

Portisch hurries to open up the h-file before White’s queenside pieces get into play.

\textbf{17 \textbf{a}4 \textbf{e}5 18 \textbf{xe}5 \textbf{xe}5 19 \textbf{e}2 \textbf{h}4 20 \textbf{g}4}
Or 20 h1 h×g3! 21 h×h8 g2 22 g×g8
g6 23 f3 x×e4+ and wins — Portisch.
20...h3 21 f3 h2 22 h1 h3
Intending ...h6, with devastating pressure on White’s camp. Black soon won.

Example 18
V.Kramnik-B.Gelfand
Belgrade 1997

White is a pawn down but his active pieces and the weak enemy pawns on c6 and e5 provide compensation. Can you spot Kramnik’s strong bishop manoeuvre?

23 W×c1!

Preparing d1-b3 in order to seize the a2-g8 diagonal. This would transform the passive bishop on f3 into a terrific piece now that Black has no light-squared counterpart. 23 Wb1?! is less accurate due to 23...c×c4 attacking the other bishop.

23...Wc4

Gelfand searches for relief in a queen exchange. 23...c×c4? no longer worked due to 24 d1 followed by 25 b3; while 23...a5
24 d1 a4, taking the b3-square from the bishop, can be met by 25 b1 fb8 26 e2!? h7 (the threat was 27 xb6) 27 Wc2 followed by 28 ed1 with strong pressure.

Again please remember, that we are not always able to fulfill our plans!
24 d1 Wxc1 25 Wxc1 Wfc8 26 b3+ h7
27 e6

White has managed to activate his pieces considerably.
27...a5!

A good defensive move. The queen’s rook will be useful along the seventh rank, whereas the a-pawn gets ready to kick away the bishop on b3.

28 d×g7
28 c3! a4 29 c2 seems more ambitious, keeping the powerful knight.
28...×g7 29 e6 b×d7 30 ed1 a7 31 b2

White maintains strong pressure for the pawn, although Gelfand eventually drew.

Now let’s see a complete game where White’s light-squared bishop did the main part of the work.

Example 19
J.Hellsten-A.Brkljaca
Belgrade 2002
Nimzo-Indian Defence (E46)

1 d4 f6 2 c4 e6 3 c3 b4 4 e3 0-0 5 Wge2
d5 6 a3 e7 7 f4

This is a modest, yet fully playable version of the Rubinstein Variation in the Nimzo-Indian, in which White gives priority to a swift development. The experts prefer cxd5 exd5 8 g3 with strategically complex play.

7...c6 8 d3 dxc4 9 xc4 bd7 10 0-0 e5

Black exploits the fact that, with a knight on f4 instead of f3, White has less control of the e5-square.

11 de2 b6 12 a2!

A nice hideout for the bishop, where it stays in charge of the a2-g8 diagonal without exposing itself to the enemy pieces.

12...exd4 13 exd4 c5 14 f3 f5

Parrying the e3-e4 advance. In contrast, 14...g4 15 e4! White's kingside pawn majority slowly starts rolling, and the other bishop wakes up as well. Now in the event of 15...xd1 16 xd1 xf3?! 17 gxf3 the mobile doubled pawns are more of an asset than a burden, whereas the black knights are a long way from reaching the outpost on d4.

15 e5

Touching the f7-pawn while preparing the advance of the kingside pawns.

15...wc7

On 15...bd7 I had planned 16 wf3! on the hunt for the bishop pair.

16 f4 ad8 17 wf3 wc8?!

Preparing 18...e6 in order to swap White's "good" bishop; however, a simpler way to this goal was 17...fd7! 18 xd7 (not 18 c4?! d3!) 18...xd7 19 e4 e6 with approximate equality, e.g. 20 b1 c4 21 d1 wc6 fighting for the open d-file.

18 a4!

Black was perhaps expecting 18 e4?! e6 19 xex6 wxe6 with an easy game. Now, on the other hand, the white queen keeps tying its counterpart to the b7-pawn and there appears the threat of 19 a5.

18...a5?

A strategical mistake that creates a weak square on b5 and makes the queenside pawn majority less mobile. Black should have preferred the pragmatic 18...e6! 19 xex6 (or 19 b1?! c4 with counterplay) 19...fxe6 with just a minimal disadvantage due to the weakness on e6.

19 e4 e6 20 b1!

The bishop switches to the b1-h7 diagonal, where it will enhance a future kingside attack.

20...fd7

Black tries to get rid of the active enemy knight. If 20...c4?! with the same intention, then 21 d3! creates the double threat of 22 f5 and 22 e5.

21 g4!

In the same spirit of keeping the pieces for future attacking purposes. Moreover, Black's minor pieces now start to feel a little cramped.

21...f6

Black weakens his kingside in order to cope with the impending white pawn advances.

22 d5!

Exploiting the fact that a capture on d5 would clear the b1-h7 diagonal for the
bishop, White brings the other knight into the attack.

22...dı6 23 ạd2?!

Here I missed 23 ạh3!, with the double threat of 24 ạh6+ and 24 e5, when both 23...f5?! 24 ạge3 and 23...ạxg4 24 ạxg4 ạxd5 25 exd5 (preparing ạf5 or ạa3-h3) leave Black under a lot of pressure.

23...c4! 24 ạh1

The pawn was poisoned due to check, but now the threat is real.

24...ạxd5?

Black should have postponed this exchange as long as possible. 24...ạc5 was much better; for example, 25 ạe3 ạc6 26 ạxb6 ạxb6 27 f5 ạf7 28 e5 ạd5! 29 ạf2 ạc7 with a complex game.

25 exd5 ạb4?!

Again 25...ạc5 was called for, although after 26 ạf5! followed by 27 ạe6(+) White is clearly better thanks to the powerful bishop.

26 ạxb4 axb4 27 a5 ạa8

28 ạf5!

Now the bishop aims for the protected square on e6 and also puts some pressure along the h3-c8 diagonal.

28...ạc5?

A tactical oversight in time trouble. Even though 28...ạg6 29 ạe6+ ạh8 30 f5 is de-

pressing for Black, this was his last chance. 29 ạh3!

The double threat towards h7 and d7 decides the game.

29...ạg6 30 ạxd7 ạxd7 31 ạxf6+! ạxf6 32 ạxd7 ạc7 33 ạad1 ạc3 34 bxc3 bxc3 35 d6 ạe6 36 ạe8+

In view of 37 d7 on the next move, Black resigned.

So far we have mainly been dealing with open diagonals. In the following examples, we will examine a few different methods of clearing a key diagonal for our bishops.

**Example 20**

**M.Vokac-D.Navarra**

**Czech Championship,**

**Karlový Vary 2005**

In a typical Sicilian battle a piece exchange on d3 deprived White of the bishop pair but also strengthened his centre. Next he would like to attack on the kingside by ạg3, f4-f5 etc.

17...d5!

A standard advance that softens up the long diagonal for the bishop. Black could also consider 17...f5!? in the same spirit; for example, 18 ạg3 fxe4 19 ạd4!? ạf6! 20
dxe4 \w_\text{c7} 21 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}b2} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c4} intending ...\text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c6} with counterplay.

18 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}e5}?!

A safer choice was 18 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}g3} dxe4 19 dxe4 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d3} 20 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c1} intending \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}f2-d2}. After 18 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}e5} White plans to put a knight on d4 in order to block the bishop on b7, and then resume the kingside attack with f4-f5. However, when playing 17...d5 Navara had already defined his next, powerful move.

18...d4!

This pawn sacrifice turns the bishop on b7 into a giant, and also creates a protected square on d5.

19 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}exd4} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c6}

It was time for the passive knight to enter the game. Less appropriate is 19...\text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d5}?! 20 f5! with an attack.

20 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}b2}

Now after 20 f5 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xd4} 21 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xd4} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}h4}! 22 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d2} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}g5}, followed by \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d5}, it is Black who ends up attacking.

20...\text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xd4} 21 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xd4} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d5} 22 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}e2} f5!

Eliminating the f4-f5 idea once and for all. Now 23 exf6 is strongly met by 23...\text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xf6}, pinning the knight.

23 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}ac1} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xc1} 24 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xc1} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d8}!

Black improves the other bishop as well.

25 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c5} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}a2} 26 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c1}

Before 25...\text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}a2} Black had to anticipate the line 26 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c2}?! \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}b6} 27 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}e2}! \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xc5} 28 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c3} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xb2} 29 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xb2} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}e3}! 30 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}e2} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c8} with a clear initiative.

26...\text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xe2} 27 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xe2} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}b6} 28 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c3} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d8}

Despite the minus pawn Black has the better chances in this endgame, thanks to his bishops. The game saw 29 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}h3} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}h6} 30 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}h2} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}f7} 31 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}g3} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d7} 32 d4?! \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}d5} 33 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}e3} a5! (opening a second front) 34 bxa5 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}xa5} 35 \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c1} \text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}c4} followed by ...\text{\texttt{\textasciitilde}b6}, pressuring d4. Navara went on to win after a long battle.

**Example 21**

S.Krivoshey-G.Timoshenko
Kiev 2001
In this strategically complex position White enjoys some advantage, thanks to the bishop pair and his sounder pawn structure, but Black’s game is compact.

28 f4!

Softening up the a1-h8 diagonal for the bishop, where there is no black counterpart.

28...e4?!

Preferable was 28...f8 keeping the tension, though Black is under pressure after 29 fx5 dxe5 30 g3!, eyeing the e5-pawn as well as the g6-square.

29 e2 e6 30 g4!

Another strong advance that aims at clearing the g-file towards the target on g7. White also puts some indirect pressure on e4, which explains Black’s next move.

30...d5

Or 30...fxg4? 31 xf6! gxf6 32 xg4 with a clear advantage thanks to Black’s numerous weaknesses – Krivoshey.

31 cxd5 xd5

This drops a pawn, but after 31...bxd5 32 g3 fxg4 (parrying the threat of 33 g5) 33 xg4 White’s kingside pressure is unbearable.

32 gx5 b3 33 e1 c4 34 g4!

Again unblocking the long diagonal for the bishop.

34 xg4 35 xg4 d8

White is a pawn up, but how can he progress?

24 g4!

Istratescu prepares 25 f5 in order to soften up the a2-g8 diagonal for his bishop. This plan goes very well with the position of the white king, who won’t get exposed by the pawn advances, nor obstruct a future kingside attack.

24...bc8 25 f5! exf5 26 gxf5 g7

After 26...xf5 27 x4 the three passed pawns will become extremely powerful in any endgame. As for the middle-

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**Example 22**

A.Istratescu-V.Buturin

Bucharest 1992
Mastering Chess Strategy

game, White may consider an attack down the f-file.
27 fxg6 hxg6 28 Hf3 Hc5 29 Hg1

The straightforward 29 Hf2!? seemed even stronger.
29...Hb6?!

Black should have tried 29...He8! with the threat of 30...He2. At this point, the tempting 30 Hxf7? backfires due to 30...Hg5!, exploiting the motif of a back rank mate.
30 Hgf1 Hg5+ 31 Hb1 f5

Black has avoided a direct attack on f7, but now faces problems on the g-file.
32 h4! Hf6

Or 32...Hxh4? 33 Hxa4 with the double threat of 34 Hxh4 and 34 Hd7+.
33 Ha1 Hb5 34 Hg1!

By the threat of 35 H5 White provokes Black’s next move, which will clear the h-file for the attack.
34...Hxh4 35 Hh3 Hf6 36 Hgh1 Hf8 37 Hd2!

Suddenly the black king has nowhere to hide.
37...Hc6 38 Hh7 Hg7 39 Hh8+! Hxh8

After 39...He7 40 Hc1+ White wins quickly.
40 Hxh8+ Hc7 41 Hh7+

There follows 42 Hd4(+) with decisive threats, so Black resigned. In fact the bishop on a2 didn’t move during this whole fragment, but it still performed an important role by controlling crucial squares such as f7, e6 and g8.

Example 23
V.Kramnik-L.Van Wely
Dortmund 2008

![Chess Board Diagram]

White has already taken the first steps to a kingside attack, but it is unlikely to succeed unless more pieces participate. Kramnik finds a way to activate the bishop on b2.
17 Hxe4 dxe4 18 c5!

This clever move exploits the vulnerable position of the bishop on b4 in order to clear the long diagonal.
18...bxc5

Safer was 18...f6, pushing away the powerful knight, even though after 19 Hc4 Ha6 20 Hfc1 followed by a2-a3 White gets some advantage – Kramnik.
19 a3 Hc5 20 dxc5 Hxc5

Slower moves, such as 20...Hcc8, permit 21 f5 with a promising attack. The lack of defenders on Black’s kingside is strongly felt, just as in the game.
21 b4 \textit{wb5} 22 \textit{wg3!}

The clearance of the long diagonal has turned \textit{g7} into White's main target.

22...\textit{b6?!}

This doesn't contribute a lot to the defence. Preferable was 22...f5, clearing the seventh rank, although after 23 \textit{ad1! c5} (the threat was 24 \textit{ad7}) 24 \textit{wg6 ad5} 25 \textit{xd5! exd5} 26 \textit{we6+} White still obtains a dangerous attack.

23 \textit{ad7! g6}

Both 23...\textit{xe3+} 24 \textit{h1} and 23...f6 24 \textit{xf6+ xf8} 25 \textit{xe4} were equally bad for Black.

24 \textit{f6+}

Kramnik also suggests 24 \textit{xb6 wb6} 25 f5! \textit{xf5} 26 \textit{xf5} and the black king is doomed on the dark squares.

24...\textit{f8} 25 \textit{e5 cc8} 26 \textit{wh4!}

The white forces coordinate nicely.

26...h5 27 \textit{h7+ xe8} 28 \textit{d6 cc7} 29 \textit{fd1!}

One more piece enters the attack, and Black resigned in view of the decisive 30 \textit{f6+} on the next move.

\textit{Example 24}

\textbf{I.Sokolov-T.Nedev}
Calvia Olympiad 2004

In order to exploit the strength of the bishop pair White needs to open up the position. Sokolov hurries to clear the best diagonal for his dark-squared bishop.

16 f5! g5

Preventing 17 \textit{f4+}, but not the idea to occupy the h2-b8 diagonal as such. Sokolov suggests 16...e5! as a better option, although after 17 fxe6 fxe6 18 \textit{f4+ e5} 19 \textit{h2} followed by \textit{d3} White seems a little better anyway. One future idea is \textit{d2-f1-e3-d5}, redirecting the knight to the centre.

17 \textit{g1! f6}

Creating a protected square at e5.

18 \textit{h2+ e5}

A temporary pawn sacrifice in order to liberate the pieces. On 18...\textit{de5} there is the strong 19 \textit{xe5 xe5} 20 \textit{d5!}, threat-
ening to capture on e5 in both ways. 19 fx6+ Qe5 20 e7!

The most annoying way of returning the pawn.
20...Ne8 21 Ne2 Nxe7 22 Nh5

White now puts his focus on the weak f6-pawn.
22...Nd7 23 fx6 Nfx6 24 f6!

The f-pawn is gone, but the same square remains weak.
24...Nh8 25 Nh5!

Fixing the h6-pawn as a future target.
25...Nh7 26 Ng6 Nh7 27 Nf5

With long-term pressure on the e5 and h6 pawns, White is better in this endgame.

Finally, let’s see a complete game on the topic of clearing diagonals for our bishops.

Example 25
G.Kamsky-G.Kasparov
Manila Olympiad 1992
King’s Indian Defence (E88)

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 Be3 e5

A classical response to the Sämisch Variation.
7 d5 c6

Considering that White often castles long in this variation, it makes sense to take action on the queenside.
8 Qd2 cxd5 9 cxd5 a6 10 Be3 Qh5 11 g4?

A bad mistake that will cause White trouble for the rest of the game. 11 Qe2 was correct, covering the f4-square.

11...Qf4!

A typical sacrifice in the King’s Indian. Sometimes in this opening, it is even a rook that settles on f4!
12 c2

At this point White shouldn’t even consider accepting the gift with 12 Qxf4? exf4 13 Qxf4, since the bishop on g7 turns into a monster. After 13...b5, followed by ...Qb6 and ...Nd7-e5, we can also notice that the e3-bishop is sorely missed in the white camp.
12...b5

Black resumes the queenside offensive that was initiated five moves ago.
13 Qf2 Qd7 14 Qe2 b4 15 a4 a5!

Not 15...Qxe2? 16 Qxe2 and Black’s position loses a lot of its potential. Instead, Kasparov lets the knight stay on f4, convinced that it will be worth a pawn to clear the long diagonal for the bishop. In fact, by 15...a5 followed by 16...a6, he is trying to provoke the capture on f4.
16 Qxf4
16 0-0-0 a6 17 Qxf4 exf4 18 Qxf4 Qe5 reaches similar play as in the game.

16...exf4 17 Qxf4 Qe5

In return for the pawn, Black enjoys control of the long diagonal and the powerful e5-knight.

18 0-0-0

18 Qb6? fails tactically to 18...Qxf3+, while after 18 0-0 a6 19 Qfd1 c8 Black is better – Kasparov. It is evident that the g2-g4 move doesn’t fit very well with short castling.

18...c4!

Black prepares ...d7 with an attack on b2, and simultaneously prevents 19 Qb6.

19 e3

Kamsky finds the only response.

26 e5! b3

The simplifications arising after 26...Qxe5 27 f4 were not to Kasparov’s taste.

27 axb3 axb3 28 Qxb3 Qb8 29 Qc4 Qxc4 30 Qxc4 Qxe5 31 Qe2

Not 31 b3? Qc8 32 Qc2 Qxc4+! 33 bxc4 Qb2+ and Black wins – Kasparov.

Thanks to the inventive 26 e5 White managed temporarily to block the black bishop, thus avoiding a mortal capture on b2. Even so, his king is in a lot of trouble. The principle that the presence of opposite-coloured bishops favours the attacker applies well to this position.

31...Qa7!

Black prepares an invasion down the a-file.

32 Qc1

Kamsky deliberately exposes himself to a pin with Qf4 at any moment, aware that the loss of the exchange would be the least of his problems.

32...a8 33 b3 Qf4 34 Qc2 Qe7!

The rook shifts to a better file. Now the white king turns out to be stuck in the middle.

35 Qd3 Qc5 36 Qb1 Qe3!

Before checking on a2, Black lures the
enemy queen to a more exposed square.
37 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}d4\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}2+ 38 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}1
Or 38 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash b}}b2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xb2+ 39 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}xb2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}e5 40 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}a2
\texttt{\textbackslash a}c3+ and the check on \texttt{\textbackslash g}1 decides.
38...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xf3
White can’t avoid material losses.
39 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xf4 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xf4 40 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xa2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}g1+ 41 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash c}}c2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}xh2+
White resigned.

For the related exercises, see page 301.

The knight
Due to its short range the knight usually becomes stronger the closer it gets to the centre. Typically it is looking for squares where it won’t be chased away by the opponent’s pawns, so-called protected squares or outposts. Let’s see some examples on this topic.

\textbf{Example 26}
\texttt{Y.Pelletier-M.Sebag}
French Team Championship 2007

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example26.png}
\end{center}

White has just played 22 b4, gaining some space on the queenside. Should Black prevent the further advance 23 b5 or ignore it?

22...a6?

Preferable was 22...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash c}}7 23 b5 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}c8 – Pelletier. With the a-pawn still on a7 Black keeps the option of ...b7-b6 if necessary. In contrast, 22...a6 leaves the b6 and c5 squares seriously weakened, something that Pelletier immediately exploits.

23 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}1!
Vacating the d3-square for the knight.
23...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash c}}7
Or 23...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}c6 24 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}e1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}e7 25 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}c5! followed by \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}c1 with a clear plus. Later on the knight might replace the rook on c5.

24 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}1!
A key move. The knight is heading for the protected square at c5, where it will attack the weak pawns on b7 and e6, while restricting Black on the open file.

24...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}c8 25 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash c}}6?!
White is also much better after 25...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xc1
26 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xc1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xc1 27 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}xc1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}e8 28 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}c5, intending \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}7 and \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}c5. But the text loses material.

26 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}c5 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}e7 27 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}b7!
A tactical twist that decides the game. Now after 27...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xb7 28 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}xa6 White recovers the material and, more importantly, obtains two terrific passed pawns.

27...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}d4 28 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xc7 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xc7 29 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash c}}c5 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}xc5 30 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}xd4

Of course not 30 bxc5? \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash b}}3. In the game White is able to generate a decisive passed pawn.

30...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}c6 31 b5! \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}xb5 32 a6 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash a}}c8 33 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}b6! \textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbackslash w}}f8
34 a7
In this desperate position, Black resigned.

\textbf{Example 27}
\texttt{G.Kasparov-A.Beliavsky}
Candidates match (game 9), Moscow 1983

White is better thanks to his sounder
pawn structure and more active pieces. Kasparov now initiates a transfer of his knights to the kingside, where the absence of a black g6-pawn has left the light squares a little loose.

19 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{\textbf{e2}}}!} \)

Heading for the protected square at f5.

19...\( \text{\textbf{g8} 20 \text{\textbf{c3}}} \) \( \text{\textbf{a6} 21 \text{\textbf{g3}}} \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{w}}f8}! \)

Bothered by the threatened 22 \( \text{\textbf{h5}} \) Beliavsky unpins the knight. However, 21...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{f8}}} \) preparing ...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{e7}}} \), was a better reply – Kasparov. There can follow 22 \( \text{\textbf{c4}} \) (22 \( \text{\textbf{h5}}!? \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{e7}}} \) makes less sense) 22...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{e7}}} \) 23 \( \text{\textbf{w}}d2 \) \( \text{\textbf{h7}} \) 24 \( \text{\textbf{e3}} \) preparing 25 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{ef5}}} \). At this point, both 24...\( \text{\textbf{xd}}5 \) 25 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{ef5}}} \) and 24...\( \text{\textbf{x}}e4 \) 25 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{xe7}}} \) \( \text{\textbf{xd}}2 \) 26 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{xd}}8} \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{xd}}8} \) 27 \( \text{\textbf{ad}}1 \) \( \text{\textbf{b}}3 \) 28 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{d}}3+} \) \( \text{\textbf{g}}7 \) 29 \( \text{\textbf{c4}} \), with the double threat of 30 \( \text{\textbf{c2}} \) and 30 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{e4}}} \), are troublesome for Black.

22 \( \text{\textbf{df1}}! \)

The other knight joins his colleague in the battle for the f5-square. Less logical is 22 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{f5}}}!? \) \( \text{\textbf{xf5}} \) 23 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{exf5}}} \), when the pieces can no longer make use of this square.

22...\( \text{\textbf{h7}} \) 23 \( \text{\textbf{e3}} \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} \)

Black manages to swap his bad bishop, but the problem with the f5-square remains.

24 \( \text{\textbf{xf6+}} \) \( \text{\textbf{xf6}} \) 25 \( \text{\textbf{gf5}} \) \( \text{\textbf{h5}} \) 26 \( \text{\textbf{f2}}! \)

A clever move that improves the king and clears the path for the rook.

26...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{xf5}}} \) 27 \( \text{\textbf{xf5}} \) \( \text{\textbf{f4}} \) 28 \( \text{\textbf{g3}} \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{h3}}}+ \) 29 \( \text{\textit{\textbf{e2}}} \)

With \( \text{\textbf{h1}} \) coming up, White has a huge advantage and won just a few moves later.

Example 28
M.Matulovic-S.Marjanovic
Yugoslav Championship, Bjelovar
1979

In this typical French structure, in exchange for his weaknesses on e5 and e6, Black has some pressure on the d4-pawn and along the f-file. His next moves might be ...\( \text{\textbf{af8}} \) and ...\( \text{\textbf{g5-g4}} \). Matulovic found an excellent knight manoeuvre.
20 \( \text{a4!} \)

This knight was not doing anything substantial on c3. Now it is heading for c5-d3-e5, and also eyes the b6-square.

20...\( \text{xf8} \)

After 20...\( \text{xd4} \) White had prepared 21 \( \text{b6! xf3+} \) 22 \( \text{xf3 g5} \) 23 \( \text{h3}! \) and wins, since 23...\( \text{d8} \) 24 \( \text{xd7} \) \( \text{xd7} \) 25 \( \text{c8}+ \) ends with mate.

21 \( \text{c5} \) \( \text{c8} \) 22 \( \text{d3} \) \( \text{h6} \)

Or 22...\( \text{b8} \) 23 \( \text{d5} \) \( \text{d5} \) 24 \( \text{xe5} \) with a clear advantage thanks to the strong knight on e5. Black has no time for 24...\( \text{xf2} \) because his own knight hangs on h5.

23 \( \text{d5} \) \( \text{xe5} \) 24 \( \text{xe5}! \)

Based on the tactical line 24...\( \text{xf2?} \) 25 \( \text{xc8}! \), White is able to recapture in the best way.

24...\( \text{g5} \) 25 \( \text{f3}! \)

Simple but strong. Now Black's kingside attack is practically over, whereas the control of the c-file and the prominent knight on e5 are long-term factors in White's favour.

25...\( \text{g6} \)

Or 25...\( \text{f4} \) 26 \( \text{g3} \) intending \( \text{c7} \) and \( \text{c2} \) – Matulovic.

26 \( \text{c7} \) \( \text{h4} \) 27 \( \text{d2} \) \( \text{f4} \) 28 \( \text{ec1} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 29 \( \text{wh6!} \)

In a hopeless position Black lost on time.

---

Example 29

J.Polgar-V.Anand

Wijk aan Zee 1998

![Chess Diagram]

The present structure can arise in several Sicilian variations. Usually Black needs active piece play in order to compensate for the weaknesses on d5 and d6, whereas in the above position, he has been left with the “bad” bishop. Thus White’s plan suggests itself: install the knight on the protected square d5, exploiting the fact that Black has no minor pieces that can swap it off.

21 \( \text{c3!} \)

Preparing \( \text{c2-e3-d5} \).

21...\( \text{b4} \)

If 21...\( \text{c6} \) 22 \( \text{c2} \) \( \text{e5} \), intending to swap the knight when it arrives to e3, then simply 23 \( \text{b4}! \) followed by \( \text{d1} \) and \( \text{d5} \). The ability to use different routes to the same square is indeed a key virtue of the knight. On the other hand, after 21...\( \text{c5} \) 22 \( \text{d1} \) a5 23 \( \text{c2} \) the knight will choose the e3-d5 route instead, after a preparatory 24 \( \text{d3} \). Contrary to the previous subline, \( \text{e7-g5} \) is unavailable here due to the d6-pawn hanging.

22 \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{g6} \) 23 \( \text{g3} \)
Another option was 23 \( \text{c2!} \) \( \text{c5} \) 24 \( \text{e3} \), speeding up the knight manoeuvre.

23...\( \text{c5} \) 24 \( \text{d1!} \)

White should keep d5 clear for the knight.

24...a5 25 \( \text{c2} \) \( \text{g7} \)

25...\( \text{g5?} \) failed to 26 \( \text{xd6} \), while after 25...\( \text{c6} \) 26 \( \text{d3!} \) the problem with the d6-pawn remains.

26 \( \text{d3} \)

Of course the immediate 26 \( \text{e3?} \) failed to 26...\( \text{xe4} \), but after the preparatory text move there is nothing that can stop \( \text{e3-d5} \).

26...\( \text{c6} \) 27 \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{c8} \) 28 \( \text{g2} \)

A useful move that rules out ...\( \text{h3} \) at any moment.

28...\( \text{we6} \) 29 \( \text{we2} \) \( \text{d8} \) 30 \( \text{d5} \)

\( \text{g8} \) 35 \( \text{h4! g7?!} \)

Preferable was 35...\( \text{h5} \), complicating the enemy attack, although after 36 f3 \( \text{g7} \) 37 \( \text{we2} \) followed by \( \text{d1-h1} \) and g3-g4, White’s game is promising anyway – Polgar.

36 \( \text{h5!} \)

After this White can clear the h-file whenever she likes.

36...\( \text{g5} \) 37 \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{c8} \) 38 \( \text{d1} \) \( \text{c6} \) 39 \( \text{we2} \) \( \text{c8} \) 40 \( \text{h1} \) \( \text{g8} \) 41 f3! \( \text{b8} \) 42 \( \text{f2} \)

On f2 the queen not only controls the entire g1-a7 diagonal, but also gets closer to the h-file via g1-h2.

42...\( \text{b7} \) 43 h\( \text{xg6} \) fxg6

Or 43...hxg6 44 \( \text{g1} \) followed by \( \text{h2} \) with a strong attack.

44 c5!

A logical advance after the ...fxg6 recapture, which left the black king more exposed towards the centre.

44...\( \text{dx} \) 45 \( \text{xc5} \) \( \text{d8} \) 46 \( \text{c1} \)

With the plan of \( \text{c4} \) and \( \text{e3-c1} \) to seize the c-file and enable \( \text{c8} \). White has a clear plus and went on to win the game.

Example 30
G.Kasparov-J.Piket
Tilburg 1997

White has fulfilled his plan. On d5 the knight is controlling a lot of important squares, and it can’t be expelled nor exchanged.

30...\( \text{c5} \)

Or 30...\( \text{b6} \) 31 \( \text{d3} \) followed by \( \text{f3} \) with attacking prospects – Polgar.

31 \( \text{we3} \)

White now slowly prepares a kingside attack, exploiting Black’s lack of counterplay.

31...\( \text{e7} \) 32 \( \text{d3} \) \( \text{d8} \) 33 \( \text{d2} \) \( \text{c6} \) 34 \( \text{d1} \)
In exchange for the pawn White has a lead in development. Kasparov now seizes the initiative by means of a strong knight manoeuvre.

16 \texttt{Qfd}2! 0-0 17 \texttt{Qe}4

Getting ready to install a knight on d6.

17...\texttt{Qe}7 18 \texttt{Qg}3!

After 18 \texttt{Qxe}7?! \texttt{Qxe}7 White can’t go 19 \texttt{Qed}6? due to 19...\texttt{Qxe}5! 20 \texttt{Qxb}7 \texttt{Qxc}4 21 \texttt{Qxc}4 \texttt{Qxb}7 etc. In the game, the bishop on g3 keeps an eye on the vital e5 and d6 squares.

18...\texttt{Qd}8 19 \texttt{Qcd}6!

By using this knight White clears the c-file and also keeps the \texttt{Qe}4-c5 resource.

19...\texttt{Qa}5 20 \texttt{Qc}2!

Preparing \texttt{Qd}3 with a kingside attack. We saw a similar pattern in the previous game: once White has completed the knight manoeuvre, he is ready for action on other parts of the board.

20...\texttt{b}3 21 \texttt{Qb}1 \texttt{Qb}6 22 \texttt{Qd}3 g6 23 \texttt{Qc}5!

With the double threat of \texttt{Qd}7 and \texttt{Qxe}6.

23...\texttt{Qc}8 24 h4! \texttt{Qc}6?!

White is also much better after 24...h5 25 \texttt{Qxd}4 \texttt{Qc}6 26 \texttt{We}4, but now he wins on the spot.

25 a5!

An ingenious intermediate move to deflect the black pieces from the kingside defence. In contrast, the immediate 25 h5? permitted 25..\texttt{Qxe}5! 26 \texttt{Qxe}5 \texttt{Qxd}6 with unnecessary complications.

25...\texttt{Qxa}5

Now on 25...\texttt{Qxa}5 the time is right for 26 h5 with an irresistible attack.

26 \texttt{Qxf}7! \texttt{Qxf}7 27 \texttt{Qxg}6+ \texttt{Qf}8

Or 27...\texttt{Qg}7 28 \texttt{Qe}8+ \texttt{Qf}8 29 \texttt{Qxc}6 winning.

28 \texttt{Qxe}6+ \texttt{Qxe}6 29 \texttt{Qxc}6 \texttt{Qd}7 30 \texttt{Qxh}6+

Black resigned in view of 30...\texttt{Qe}8 31 e6 \texttt{Qxc}6 32 \texttt{Qxf}7+ \texttt{Qd}7 33 \texttt{Qf}5+.

Quite often the idea of exploiting protected squares appears as a consequence of incautious pawn moves by the opponent. We already saw this in Pelletier-Sebag (22...a6?), and here is another example.

\textit{Example 31}

\textbf{S.Guliev-J.Timman}

\textit{European Team Championship, Pula 1997}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

24 f4?

Strengthening the knight on e5 but leaving the pawn structure in bad shape. The simple 24 \texttt{Qcd}3 was much a sounder option.
24...\( \text{d}6! \)
Timman immediately directs his attention to the newly created protected square at e4.

![Chessboard Diagram]

25 \( \text{g}4 \text{e}4 26 \text{c}d3 \text{f}6 
Black has been more cautious with his f-pawn than his opponent, and now manages to expel the enemy knight from the centre.

27 \( \text{f}3 \text{c}4 
A nice square for the knight, but it doesn’t really match its opposing number on e4. The more centrally placed, the more powerful are the knights!

28 \( \text{w}e1 \text{h}8 29 \text{w}h4 
White prepares a kingside attack, but this is unlikely to succeed with the centre under Black’s command. Moreover, the c1-bishop is out of play.

29...\( \text{w}d7 30 \text{g}5 \text{fxg5} 31 \text{fxg5} \text{g}8 
Timman also suggests the simpler 31...\( \text{g}6! ? .

32 \( \text{g}6 \text{h}6 33 \text{f}e5!? .\text{xe5} 34 \text{dxe5} \text{w}e7! 
Avoiding 34...\( \text{xe5} ? 35 \text{b}2! \text{xd}3 36 \text{f}7 and White takes over.

35 \( \text{w}h5 \text{f}8! 
Again 35...\( \text{xe5} ? was wrong due to 36 \( \text{xe5} \text{w}xe5 37 \text{w}xe5 \text{dxe5} 38 \text{f}7! with compensation — Timman. Instead, Black aims to exchange White’s active pieces to reduce his counterplay.

36 \( \text{f}7 \text{xf7} 37 \text{gxf7+} \text{wxf7} 38 \text{xh6} \text{e}8! 
The last piece enters the game.

39 \( \text{h}4 \text{xe6} 40 \text{w}f4 \text{w}h5

Black enjoys a clear advantage thanks to his active pieces. In conclusion, we should remember that any pawn move leads to some kind of weakening; 24 \( \text{f}4? in this example handed over the e4-square to Black and restricted the white bishop.

Example 32
G.Cabrilo-R.Ziatdinov
Belgrade 1991

![Chessboard Diagram]

In this typical Spanish structure it is not
Mastering Chess Strategy

easy for White to exploit his space advantage. The desired c4-c5 advance is unlikely to succeed in the near future; e.g. 24 a2 a7 25 a3 c5 26 a4 c6 and Black holds. Instead, Cabrilo launches a slow, but powerful knight manoeuvre.

24 e1!

Preparing d2-b3-a5-c6, by which the passive knight would turn into a giant.

24...d7

The closed nature of the position makes it difficult for Black to interfere with the opponent’s plan. So he prefers to reinforce his queenside defence, aware that when the knight arrives at b3, the threat of c4-c5 will be renewed.

25 d2 c8 26 b3 e7 27 a2!

The queen’s rook should also enter the game. The knight’s jump to a5 can wait.

27 wa7

Another option is 27 c7 28 a5 wa7 preparing ...xc8. At this moment, let’s compare the knights on a5 and a4. Both are situated on protected squares; however, the difference is that the white knight may soon jump to a more powerful one, i.e. 29 xb5 axb5 30 xc7 xc7 31 a4 wb6 32 c6 with a clear advantage.

28 ac2 e8

Enabling ...e7-g5. There was no time for 28...d8?, heading for b6, due to 29 c5.

29 cb5

After activating his pieces, White resorts to concrete action. The quiet 29 g3?, preparing 30 h4 to prevent ...g5, was interesting as well, since 29...g5! at once would fail to 30 c5.

29 xc2 30 xc2 axb5

Or 30 xc8 31 xc8! xc8 32 xc8 wd7 33 b8 with a decisive advantage.

31 a5 g5 32 d2 a8

Prophylaxis against a5-c6.

33 g3 a7?

Black should not have abandoned the kingside defence with his bishop. After 33...h5! 34 c6 wb7 35 h4 th6 he would have much better chances of resistance.

34 c6 wa6

White has completed the manoeuvre initiated ten moves ago, and the knight is terrific on c6. But how to make further progress?

35 e1!

The initial move of this example is repeated, and again it is very strong. Cabrilo wants to put his queen on e2, from where it can take part in a kingside attack and also puts pressure on the b5-pawn.

35...b6 36 we2 c7?!

Black should have played 36...xe3!, eliminating the e3-f5 resource. After 37 fxe3 (not 37 xe3?! b2 and the knight reaches c4) 37...wb6 38 xb5! g4! 39 wd3 b2 Black obtains counterplay. So the immediate 36 f5? was probably more precise.

37 f5 xf5 38 e7+

Thus White manages to keep a knight on the excellent f5-square.

38...f8 39 xf5 xd8 40 c6 f6 41 g2!

Some prophylaxis in view of the line 41 xd6? xd6! 42 xd6 xf2+. Now the rest is easy.
41...\textit{Wa7 42 Wg4 \textit{Qe8 43 \textit{Qxb5 Wb8 44 Wc2!}}}
\textit{Wd4 45 \textit{Qxe8 Wxe8 46 Wa2}}
Black resigned.

Sometimes, the usage of a protected square is preceded by the exchange of the enemy forces that defend it. Here is a simple example.

\textit{Example 33}
\textit{Z.Hracek-Z.Almasi}
Odorheiu Secuiesc 1995

\texttt{\begin{center}
\begin{array}{c}
\textbf{White} \\
\textbf{Black}
\end{array}
\end{center}}

\textit{\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) -- (1,1) -- (2,2) -- (3,3) -- (4,2) -- (5,1) -- (6,0) -- cycle;
\draw (0,2) -- (1,3) -- (2,2) -- (3,1) -- (4,2) -- (5,3) -- (6,2) -- cycle;
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}}

Black is just about to improve his pawn structure by 29...\textit{d5}, while ...\textit{Qb6-c4} is another interesting resource, for example if White snatches a pawn with 29 \textit{Wxb5?!}. Hracek opts for a more strategical solution.

\textit{29 \textit{Qxb6!}}

A strong exchange that secures the d5-square for the knight, and creates a “good knight vs. bad bishop” scenario.

\textit{29...\textit{Qxb6 30 \textit{Qf1!}}}

The knight hurries to d5 before Black manages to resume the ...\textit{d6-d5} idea.

\textit{30...\textit{Qe7 31 \textit{Qe3 Qh4 32 Qd5! Qb7}}}

After 32...\textit{Qxe1? 33 \textit{Qxb6 Qb8 34 bxa5}} White wins a decisive pawn.

\textit{33 \textit{Qeb1}}

The strong knight leaves White better on the whole board, and he now opens a new front on the queenside.

\textit{33...\textit{Wc8 34 \textit{Qh2!}}}

Against the plan of ...\textit{Qg3} and ...\textit{Qd8-h4}.

\textit{34...\textit{Wd8 35 g3 Qg5 36 a4! axb4}}

Or 36...\textit{bxa4 37 b5!}, creating a terrific passed pawn.

\textit{37 \textit{Qxb4 Wb8 38 Wb1 Qa7 39 a5!}}

\textit{39...\textit{Qa6}}

Black had to stop 40 a6, but now he succumbs on the b-file.

\textit{40 c4!}

Creating a strong passed pawn.

\textit{40...\textit{Qd8 41 Qxb5 Qxb5 42 cxb5 Qxa5 43 Qxa5 Qxa5 44 b6}}

The further advance of this pawn is soon helped by the queen, so Black resigned.

In the previous examples the protected squares were available from the very beginning. Now let’s see a few different ways in which they can be created.

\textit{Example 34}
\textit{A.Vyzmanavin-F.Braga}
Benidorm 1993

White is slightly better thanks to his
space advantage. Vyzmanavin now opts for a concrete plan: the installation of a knight on d6.

16 e5! b7
Also after 16...a6 17 e4 the knight reaches d6 with an initiative for White.
17 e4 c5 18 d6 eb8
On 18...xf3 Vyzmanavin had planned 19 xf3 ed8 20 g3 cxd4 21 f4!. Then White could consider cd1xd4 or even f4-f5! with attacking prospects.

19 b5
A clever move that enables c1-c7 as a response to c5xd4 at any moment.
19...d5 20 e3 c6!
Despite b4 being a protected square, the knight wasn't doing anything substantial there. Now it helps Black in the fight for the central dark squares.

21 xc6 xc6 22 d2
White avoids the swap on f3 and prepares f2-f4 in order to reinforce his centre.
22...cxd4 23 wxd4 c5 24 c3!
With the strong knight on d6 paralysing the black camp, an attack on the king has every reason to succeed.
24...xa4 25 e4!
White is better after 25 xc5 bxc5 26 wxa4 xb2 27 c4, but the text is more energetic.
25...c6?
Underestimating the enemy attack. Correct was 25...e4 26 xe4 e8, reducing the material, though after 27 fc1 f5 28 e3, intending c7, White has a great game anyway.

26 f6+! h8
After 26...gxf6 27 g3+ h8 28 exf6 c7 29 g7 the attack is irresistible; e.g. 29...g8 30 xh7+! xh7 31 h4+ g6 32 f4! with decisive threats.

27 h3 gx6
Or 27...h6 28 f4 f8 29 xf7+! and wins – Vyzmanavin.

28 Wh4
In view of the imminent mate, Black resigned.
Example 35
I. Cheparinov-J. Hellsten
Belgrade 2002

Here is a less dramatic case of creating protected squares. White aims to exploit his space advantage by moves like $\mathcal{Q}a4$, $\mathcal{E}d2$ and $\mathcal{E}cd1$, with pressure on the b6 and d6 pawns. How can Black generate some activity?

26...e5!

A typical idea in such positions. Black deliberately weakens the d5-square, in order to transform d4 into a protected square for his knight.

27 $\mathcal{Q}xe5$

After 27 $\mathcal{Q}d5$ $\mathcal{Q}d4$ Black could soon swap the strong enemy knight by ...$\mathcal{Q}xd5$, whereas White is unable to do the same thing. Please note that with dark-squared bishops on the board, this would not be the case, thus the ...e6-e5 idea becomes less appealing. By the text move Cheparinov avoids the ...$\mathcal{Q}c6$-d4 idea but lets the black knight settle on another protected square.

27...$\mathcal{Q}xe5$

Not 27...dxes5? 28 $\mathcal{W}xd7$ $\mathcal{W}xd7$ 29 $\mathcal{Q}d5$ $\mathcal{W}d8$ 30 c5 with a clear initiative on the queenside. The bishop could soon exploit the a2-g8 diagonal.

28 $\mathcal{Q}d5$ a5

By swapping the a-pawns, Black avoids ending up with a weak pawn on a6 after White's c4-c5.

29 $\mathcal{W}f4$

The threat of 30 $\mathcal{Q}f6+$ forces the exchange on d5.

29...$\mathcal{Q}xd5$ 30 $\mathcal{Q}xd5$ axb4 31 axb4 $\mathcal{Q}c6$!

Black prevents 32 c5 with an indirect attack on e5, and also eyes the b4-pawn.

32 $\mathcal{A}cd1$

After 32 b5? $\mathcal{Q}e5$ White loses his dynamic potential on the queenside, while 32 $\mathcal{W}d2$? is well met by 32...$\mathcal{W}c7$ 33 c5 bxc5 34 bxc5 $\mathcal{A}bd8$, when 35 $\mathcal{A}d1$ fails to 35...$\mathcal{Q}e7$! 36 $\mathcal{C}xd6$ $\mathcal{A}a7$+. In the game Cheparinov instead trades the b4-pawn for the one on d6.

32...$\mathcal{A}xb4$ 33 $\mathcal{A}xd6$ $\mathcal{W}c7$ 34 $\mathcal{W}f6$ $\mathcal{A}xd6$ 35 $\mathcal{A}xd6$

On 35 $\mathcal{W}xd6$ I had planned 35...$\mathcal{W}c5$+!? when both 36 $\mathcal{O}h1$ $\mathcal{E}e8$ and 36 $\mathcal{W}xc5$ bxc5, followed by 37...$\mathcal{E}c8$ and maybe ...$\mathcal{Q}c6$-d4, seem to favour Black.

35...$\mathcal{Q}a6$!

Heading for the protected square at c5.

36 $\mathcal{A}c6$ $\mathcal{W}d7$ 37 $\mathcal{A}xb6$!

White simplifies in order to avoid long-term inferiority due to his weak pawns.

37...$\mathcal{W}a7$ 38 c5 $\mathcal{Q}xc5$ 39 $\mathcal{A}xb8+$ $\mathcal{W}xb8$ 40


Mastering Chess Strategy

\( c4 \, e8 \, 41 \, e5! \, d7 \, 42 \, c6 \, xe5 \, 43 \, xf7+! \, xf7 \, 44 \, xd7+ \, e7 \)

Draw agreed.

**Example 36**
R. J. Fischer - J. Durao
Havana Olympiad 1966

![Chess Diagram]

In this typical position from the King's Indian Attack, Fischer Hurries to create a protected square for his knights.

17 a4!

Fixing the pawn on b6 so that a knight can settle on c4 later on, without worrying about ...b6-b5. Moreover, b5 and b6 might turn into long-term weaknesses.

17...ad7?

This stereotypical move does nothing to stop White's plan. Much better was 17...g5! trying to trade the g-pawn for the central e-pawn, for example 18 h3 h5 19 xg5 xe5 with rather unclear play.

18 xf1!

This bishop exchange makes it easier for White to exploit the weak c4- and b5-squares.

18...xf1 19 xf1 de7 20 c4

Thanks to the clever 17 a4, the black pieces are now unable to get rid of the knight from c4.

20...c8 21 g5 d6 e7?

A strategical error that leads to a "good knight vs. bad bishop" scenario. Correct was 21...f8 preparing ...h7-h6, and only then ...c7. Durao perhaps feared 22 ed1, but after 22...d5! he is still defending.

22 fd2 h6 23 xe7! xe7 24 a3!

Heading for b3 in order to attack b6.

24...c7 25 b3 c6 26 e4 f8 27 e2

Preparing g2-g4 and f2-f4 in order to open a second front. Fischer soon exploited his huge advantage.

Now let's have a look at a few examples regarding "semi-protected" squares, where the knight feels quite safe despite a potential attack from an enemy pawn.

**Example 37**
G. García Gonzales - A. Karpov
Linares 1981

![Chess Diagram]

In a typical Hedgehog position White just played 23 h2?!, accidentally exposing his king along the h2-b8 diagonal. Karpov reacts very opportunely.

23...h5!

With the intention of 24...h4, softening up the dark squares around White's king.
24 h4

The threat was 24...h4 25 g4 d5+, and if White prevents this by 24 f4 h4 25 g4, then after 25...e5! 26 fx e5 \textit{x}xe5 Black is better anyway thanks to his dark square dominance. By 24 h4 White avoids such a scenario, but the lost control over g4 will soon make itself felt.

24... \textit{Cc}8 25 \textit{g}g1 \textit{g}4! 26 \textit{f}3 \textit{e}5

From now on, Karpov is ready to answer f3-f4 with ...\textit{g}4! at any moment, exploiting the fact that White can’t play h2-h3 anymore. As a consequence, the knight is practically untouchable on e5, and Black obtains a great game.

27 \textit{Add}2 \textit{Wa}7 28 \textit{Wh}1 \textit{Xed}8 29 \textit{f}4?

White loses his patience. As we already noticed, this move would be fine with the h-pawn still on h2, but in the present case it just helps Black to establish a strong knight on g4. Preferable was a non-committal move like 29 \textit{Wd}1.

29... \textit{Go}4 30 \textit{d}1?!

An awkward square for the knight. White should have preferred something like 30 \textit{f}f3, although after 30...\textit{Wb}8!, preparing ...b6-b5, Black is much better anyway – Kharitonov.

30...e5!

Black deflects the other knight from d4 to enable the ...b6-b5 thrust.

31 \textit{f}f3 \textit{b}5 32 \textit{cxb}5 \textit{axb}5 33 \textit{g}5 \textit{b}4

With the simple idea of ...\textit{b}7-a6. White had a very difficult game and soon lost.

Here is related case on the other flank: 1 e4 \textit{c}6 2 d4 \textit{d}5 3 \textit{Cc}3 \textit{dxe}4 4 \textit{xe}4 \textit{f}5 5 \textit{Cc}5 (a rather rare, but not harmless line against the Classical Caro-Kann) 5...\textit{b}6 6 \textit{b}3 \textit{f}6 7 \textit{f}3 \textit{e}6 8 \textit{g}3 (after the provocation of ...b7-b6, the kingside fianchetto makes sense) 8...a5!? (intending ...a4-a3 to soften up White’s queenside) 9 \textit{a}4 \textit{e}7 10 \textit{g}2 \textit{d}5 11 0-0 0-0. Now on c2-c4 at any moment, there follows ...\textit{d}5-b4 and the knight becomes excellent. The game ZoJovanovic-F.Doettingl, European Junior Championship 1999, continued 12 \textit{c}3 \textit{d}7 13 \textit{We}2 \textit{a}7 14 \textit{bd}2 \textit{Cc}7 and Black had no problems.

**Example 38**

E.Rozentalis-I.Georgiadis

Athens 2006

\textit{Sicilian Defence (B23)}

1 e4 \textit{c}5 2 \textit{Cc}3 \textit{a}6

An interesting sideline against the Closed Sicilian.
3 g3 b5 4 g2 b7 5 d3 e6 6 f4 b4! 7 c2 d5 8 e5

Black’s previous two pawn moves had the merit of provoking e4-e5. Since his knight on g8 hasn’t moved yet, it may now proceed directly to the “semi-protected” square at f5.

8...e7 9 e3 c6 10 f3 f5 11 0-0

White could chase the knight away with 11 g4, but then 11...h4! is a little annoying for him.

11...h5!

A useful move that reinforces the f5-square for the knight. Now if h2-h3 and g3-g4 at any moment, then after swapping on g4 followed by ...h4 or even ...h6, Black obtains counterplay against White’s weakened kingside. Thus quite often White prefers to let the knight stay on f5, at least for a while.

12 d4!?

More cautious was 12 h3 preventing the course of the game. There can follow 12...e7 13 e1 a5 14 f2 a6 15 d1 wb6 with a tense struggle. If now 16 g4, then 16...hxg4 17 hxg4 h4! with counterplay.

12...h4!

At first glance this is rather illogical since the knight is now expelled from f5.

However, Georgiadis has seen a little further into the position.

13 g4 h3! 14 h1 h6!

Thanks to the clever 13...h3, White now can’t protect the g4-pawn by 15 h3.

15 g5?!

After this Black regains control over f5 with an excellent game. White should have tried the active 15 f5! instead, although after 15...xf5 16 xf5 xf5 17 g5 wd7 Black defends quite well, whereas White has a long-term problem with his unsafe king.

15...xf5 16 g3 c7!

Keeping up the fight for the f5-square. In contrast, after 16...xf5? 17 hxg3 White would again have g3-g4 at his disposal.

17 cxb4 cxd4!

There was nothing wrong with 17...cxb4, but the text is more ambitious. In retrospect, White should probably have released the tension by 17 dxc5.

18 f2

Not 18 xd4? wb6 19 xe2 cc6 and Black wins a piece. In these positions we may observe that the knight on f5 is useful in preventing cc1-e3.

18...wb6

Black has a huge advantage, in great deal thanks to his fantastic knight on f5.
From now on the position plays itself.

19 a3 Ac8 20 Qe2 Qc6 21 Qd3 a5 22 b5 Ac5! 23 b3

Or 23 bxc6 Aa6 followed by 24...d3 with strong pressure.

23...Aa7 24 a4 Ac6!

Again exploiting the 25 bxc6 Aa6 idea, Georgiadis gets his knight to the excellent b4-square.

25 Ae2 Ab4 26 Axb4 Axb4 27 Ad1 Ae7 28 Ab1

Black also has strong pressure after 28 Qexd4 Qxd4 29 Qxd4 Ac3 30 Qe2 Qh4!.

28...Ac3! 29 Qxc3 dxec3+ 30 Axf2 Ac5 31 Abf1 Ac8

White is completely tied up and the rest is pure desperation.

32 Ae1 Ae3 33 f5 Axf1 34 f6+ Ad7

White resigns.

Going back to the first diagram, the combination of ...Qe7(h6)-f5 and ...h7-h5 are seen in a few other openings as well, such as the French and Caro-Kann. It also appears on the other flank, in terms of ...Qd7(a6)-c5 and ...a7-a5, in openings like the King's Indian and Bogo-Indian, among others.

Finally, let's see the knight performing one of its favourite tasks: blocking enemy pawns. The blockade concept will be investigated more thoroughly later on in the book, so here I will restrict myself to two simple examples.

Example 39

V. Mikhalevski – J. Ehlvest

Lake George 2005

In exchange for the pawn Black enjoys active pieces and a strong passed pawn on d4.

33 Ae1!

Simple but strong. The knight is redirected to d3 where it will block the passed pawn. In contrast, 33 Qxd4?? Aed8 loses on the spot, while 33 Qg5?! h6! 34 Qf7+ Qh7 35 Qd6 Qd5 is also unconvincing for White.

33...Ac8

On 33...Qe2? there follows 34 Axc1!, winning thanks to a back rank mate, but not 34 Qbc1?? Axe1+! 35 Axe1 Wxc1 and it is Black who wins.

34 Qg4 Axc2

35 Qbc1

The immediate 35 Qd3?! was possible as well.

35...Qa6?

Preferable was 35...Ade8! 36 g3 Qb3 37
Black has a slightly cramped position and his development is yet to be completed. My first intention was the simple 17...\textit{d}d7 followed by ...\textit{a}c8, but after 18 \textit{e}e4 \textit{w}b6 19 \textit{b}4l, preparing \textit{c}c5, White obtains some initiative. Then I saw a better solution...

17...\textit{f}6!

The queen vacates the d6-square for the knight and takes control of the long diagonal. Such an arrangement also gives the bishop access to f5 and g4.

18 \textit{e}e1

18 \textit{e}e4? fails to 18...\textit{w}xb2, so before activating his knight White improves his major pieces.

Thanks to the extra pawn and the passive bishop on g7, White is clearly better. Please note here that 39...\textit{x}xe1+ 40 \textit{x}xe1 \textit{w}xb2? fails to 41 \textit{c}c8+, a line Mikhalchishin surely observed when playing 38 \textit{e}e1.

\textbf{Example 40}

\textbf{M.Stoltz-J.Hellsten}

German League 2000

18...\textit{d}d6 19 \textit{w}e2 \textit{e}e8 20 \textit{b}5

A logical move in order to swap the strong enemy knight, but 20 \textit{e}e4 was a simpler way of achieving this; e.g. 20...\textit{x}xe4 21 \textit{x}xe4 \textit{d}7 22 \textit{a}c1 \textit{a}c8, when Black has just a minimal advantage thanks to his active queen.

20...\textit{g}4!

Tactics at service of strategy. Now after 21 \textit{w}xg4?! \textit{x}xb5 22 \textit{w}b4 \textit{d}6 followed by ...\textit{a}c8, the knight on its strong blockading post clearly outshines the bishop.

21 \textit{w}d3 \textit{a}c8 22 \textit{d}4?

At this moment Stoltz perhaps thought that he was provoking a repetition of
moves, but this is not so. 22 \( \text{c}x\text{a}7? \text{f}5 \) followed by \( \ldots \text{c}2 \) leads to a strong black initiative, so preferable was 22 \( \text{d}x\text{d}6! \text{ex}d6 \) 23 \( \text{d}2 \), eliminating the black knight. There can follow 23...\( \text{f}3 \) 24 \( \text{xf}3 \text{xf}3 \) 25 \( \text{d}4+ \text{f}6 \) with just a slight black edge.

22...\( \text{c}4 \) 23 \( \text{b}5 \text{c}8 \)

Simple and strong. Black seizes the c-file and enables a future invasion on c2, whereas the a7-pawn is irrelevant.

24 \( \text{xa}7? \)

The last chance was 24 \( \text{c}3 \), admitting that the whole knight journey was flawed. In the game Black obtains too much activity.

24...\( \text{d}4! \) 25 \( \text{e}3 \text{c}2 \) 26 \( \text{h}3 \)

This loses on the spot, but the alternatives weren’t much better; e.g. 26 \( \text{ac}1 \text{xb}2 \) 27 \( \text{h}3 \text{xh}3! \) 28 \( \text{xh}3 \text{e}4 \) and Black is winning after 29 \( \text{wc}5 \) b6 or 29 \( \text{wc}3 \text{xc}3 \) 30 \( \text{xc}3 \text{xe}1+ \).

26...\( \text{c}4 \)

Unable to keep the f2-pawn protected, White resigned.

For the related exercises, see page 304.

**The rook**

The natural working areas for our rooks are open and semi-open files. The possession of an open file often leads to control over the whole board, which is why both sides will fight for them by all possible means. One typical method in this sense is doubling rooks on the open file, sometimes even accompanied by the queen. Let’s see a few examples.

**Example 41**

J.Hellsten-L.Rojas

Santiago 2006

White has a slight but enduring advantage thanks to the weakness on d5. He now proceeds with the seizure of the open file.

20 \( \text{ac}1! \text{e}7?! \)

Black develops the queen with tempo, but now his rook remains misplaced on e5, a fact that will play against him in the battle for the c-file. In this sense, 20...\( \text{c}8 \) was better, although White keeps the advantage with the simple 21 \( \text{c}2! \), preparing to double rooks by \( \text{fc}1 \).

21 \( \text{e}3 \text{h}5 \)

If 21...a5, trying to swap pawns and create activity on the queenside, then 22 \( \text{b}5! \) followed by \( \text{c}6 \), with strong pressure. With 21...\( \text{h}5 \) Rojas instead secures a flight square for his king and enables \( \ldots \text{h}5-\text{h}4 \) at some moment.
22...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{e}6}}

White aims to double the rooks on the c-file, and this is the best way to do it. From its entry square on c6 the rook interferes with the opponent’s play and can be supported by b4-b5 if needed.

22...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{d}8}} 23 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{f}c1}} g6

Black avoids any back rank mates, but also weakens the f6-square, something that I exploit with my next move.

24 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}d4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{e}4}}

If 24...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{d}7}} covering c7, then 25 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{h}3}}! is unpleasant.

25 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{c}8}}

Another good option was 25 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{c}7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}f6}} 26 f3! \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{d}d6}} 27 f4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{f}f5}} 28 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}xf6}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{xf6}}} 29 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{a}xd5}}, transposing to a superior endgame.

25...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{xc}8}?}

This lets White install a decisive mating threat towards h8. 25...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{e}e8}} was better, although after 26 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{a}c7}}! \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}e6}} 27 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{xe}8+}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}xe8}} 28 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{xa7}}} White ends up with an extra pawn. This is a rather typical scenario: the side that gains control of an open file, later manages to seize the seventh rank.

26 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{xc}8+}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{h}h7}} 27 f4! \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}d7}} 28 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{f}f8}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}e7}} 29 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{b}b8}}!

Some geometry in order to pick up the black rook without losing my own one.

29...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}c7}} 30 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}xe5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{c}1+}} 31 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{f}f1}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}xe3+}} 32 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{g}2}}

Unfortunately for Black the white king has an escape route via h3-h4.

32...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}f2+}} 33 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{h}3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}xf1+}} 34 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{h}4}} g5+ 35 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{f}xg5}} f6 36 g6+!

In view of the imminent mate, Black resigned.

In structures with just one open file, control of that file becomes very important.

\textit{Example 42}

\textbf{J.Rohl Montes-A.Zapata}

\textit{Ubeda 1997}

25...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{d}7}}!

Black hurries to double the rooks before White manages to play \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{a}1-d1}}. Another, equally strong way to do it was 25...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{a}a7}} followed by 26...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{ad}7}}.

26 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{a}a1}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{ad}8}} 27 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{h}3}}

In the event of 27 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{ad}1}} Black should avoid the natural 27...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{x}d1?!}} 28 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{x}d1}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{x}d1}} 29 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{w}xd1}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{exe4}}} due to 30 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{f}f3}}! recovering the pawn. Much stronger is the prophylactic 27...g6! just like in the game. Here both 28 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{xd7}}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{xd7}}} and 28 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{d}d2}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{xd2}}} 29 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{d}d2}} c5, preparing ...c5-c4 and ...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\texttt{d}d3}}, leave Black on top.
27...g6!

Black creates a flight square for his king and gets ready to meet 28 Ad1? with 28...Ax1 29 Ax1 Ax1 30 Wx1 Ax4 31 Wf3 f5!, keeping the extra pawn.

28 We3 c5

Zapata slowly reinforces his position, aware that the opponent is short of active plans. Now 29 Wb6 is prevented.

29 Wg5 c4 30 Ae3?

This leads to a difficult endgame. Preferable was 30 Ah2, heading for f3.

30...Ax4 31 Wxe7 Wxe7 32 Axc4 f5!

The powerful knight on e4 should stay on the board. Now it becomes evident that White can’t stop ...Ad8-d2 seizing the second rank.

33 Aexe5 Aexe5 34 f3 Ad2 35 fxe4 fxe4 36 Ae3 Ab2

With a sound extra pawn and active pieces, Black went on to win the game.

Example 43
M.Yudovich-K.Klaman
USSR Championship, Leningrad 1947

(see following diagram)

White is better thanks to his space advantage and the weak pawn on c6. Moreover, his bishop on h2 is very strong.

22 Aa2!

A clever way of fighting for the a-file. Now Black can’t reply 22...Axa2 23 Wxa2 Wa8? because of the bishop hanging on e7.

22...Wc8 23 Ae1 Wb7 24 Wb2!

Preparing 25 Aa3 in order to triple the major pieces on the a-file. The immediate 24 Aa3? was less accurate due to 24...Axa3 25 Axa3 Ab8.

24...We6 25 Aa3 Ac7

On 25...Axa3 there follows 26 Wxa3! with the strong threat of 27 Wa7. By playing 25...Ac7 Klaman enables ...Ab8-a8, e.g. 26 Wa2?! Axa3 27 Wxa3 Ab8. However, on c7 the knight also gets exposed to the white bishop, something that Yudovich exploits with his next move.

26 Aa5! Axa5

In view of the threat 27 Axc7 winning a piece, Black has to concede the a-file.

27 Aa5 Ad6

Obviously 27...Ab8 failed to 28 Axc7. In conclusion, by tactical means White managed to seize the open file.

28 Wa3 Ab8 29 Aa7! Wc8 30 Ab5?

A tempting way of converting the advantage, although the more methodical 30
\[ \text{c7} \text{w8d8} 31 \text{wa7} \text{was also strong – Romanovsky.} \]

30...\text{cxb5} 31 \text{xb5}

White’s pressure is overwhelming and the rest is easy.

31...\text{g7} 32 \text{xb8} \text{xb8} 33 \text{xe8} \text{xe8} 34 \text{b5} \text{f8} 35 \text{we3} \text{wc8} 36 \text{wf4}

With the double threats of 37 \text{a8} and 37 \text{e5}. In this desperate position, Black resigned.

A common weapon in the battle for the open file is the occupation of entry squares. Here are two examples.

**Example 44**

**V. Anand-M. Adams**

FIDE World Championship, New Delhi 2000

![Chess board diagram]

White has some advantage mainly thanks to the misplaced knight on a7. Before recovering the pawn on f4, Anand takes a grip on the queenside.

27 \text{xb6}!

A power move that attacks Black’s weak pawns and prepares the doubling of rooks on the open b-file. In contrast, the immediate 27 \text{xf4}?! was less effective due to 27...\text{d8}! and Black covers the b6-square with improved defensive chances.

27...\text{bd8}

After 27...\text{xb6} 28 axb6 \text{c8} 29 \text{b7} the passed pawn gets too strong.

28 \text{xf4} \text{e7} 29 \text{ab1}!

The greedy 29 \text{xa6} permits 29...f5 with some counterplay, so Anand prefers to carry on with his plan. Now there is the threat of 30 \text{b7} winning a piece.

29...\text{c8} 30 \text{b7}

Just like in the previous example, the control of the open file leads to the seizure of the seventh rank.

30...\text{w6e6} 31 \text{g5} \text{h6}

Or 31...\text{hx3} 32 \text{f4} \text{wh6} 33 \text{hxh6 gxh6} 34 \text{c6} followed by \text{d5} with an enormous advantage. Black can hardly move, and the a6-pawn is easy prey.

32 \text{g3} \text{f6} 33 \text{f4}

Heading for the protected square on d5.

33...\text{e7} 34 \text{g2}!

The tempting 34 \text{xe7}?! \text{xe7} 35 \text{g6} permits 35...\text{b8}! – Anand. By 34 \text{g2} White avoids any future queen check on a1.

34...\text{g8} 35 \text{d5} \text{we6} 36 \text{d1}!

![Chess board diagram]

Installing the threat of 37 \text{g4}. Now both 36...f5? and 36...h5? fail to 37 \text{f4}, while 36...\text{f6} permits 37 \text{e7} \text{c8} 38 \text{xf6} \text{gx} 39 \text{w4} \text{g7} 40 \text{b6}. Black resigned.
Example 45
V.Smyslov-B.lvkov
Rovinj/Zagreb 1970

In this position from the King’s Indian, Black is just one move away from 21...\texttt{ad}8, reaching a balanced game. Thus Smyslov hurries to take command of the d-file, using an entry square.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

26...\texttt{xf}4 27 \texttt{\texttt{d}}4 \texttt{d}7 28 \texttt{f}5! \texttt{e}5

After 28...\texttt{xf}5 29 \texttt{xf}5 the pawn is untouchable due to 30 \texttt{d}7.
29 \texttt{\texttt{xh}6 \texttt{wh}7 30 \texttt{g}4 \texttt{xg}4 31 \texttt{xg}4 \texttt{f}3 32 \texttt{gxf}3

At this point Black apparently resigned, although by 32...\texttt{wh}2+ 33 \texttt{f}1 \texttt{xd}6 he could have kept on fighting for a while. In contrast, 32 g3! preparing 33 \texttt{d}7 would have left him completely helpless, now that 32...\texttt{\texttt{xg}3? fails to 33 \texttt{\texttt{d}4.}}

Another idea in the fight for an open file is to exchange, deflect or obstruct the enemy pieces that are defending it. Let’s see a few examples.

Example 46
L.Polugaevsky-C.Partos
Biel Interzonal 1985

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

21 \texttt{d}6! \texttt{ad}8

If 21...g4?! at any moment, then 22 \texttt{h}4 glances at \texttt{f}5 and \texttt{g}6. White also keeps the pressure after 21...\texttt{f}7 22 b3, with ideas like \texttt{c}4 and \texttt{c}3.

22 \texttt{fd}1 \texttt{xd}6

Now White obtains a strong passed pawn; however, the pressure along the d-file was quite annoying for Black.

23 \texttt{cx}d6 \texttt{f}6 24 \texttt{c}5!

The queen gets ready to support the advance of the passed pawn, and also keeps an eye on the \texttt{f}2-pawn.

24...a4 25 \texttt{b}6 \texttt{f}7

Parrying the threat of \texttt{d}6-\texttt{d}7.

26 \texttt{gxf}4!

A key capture that opens new horizons for the knight. Now if 26...\texttt{xf}4 then 27 \texttt{h}4! followed by \texttt{f}5, while in the game the knight finds another route to get there.

20 \texttt{a}6!

A strong decision. Polugaevsky has nothing against swapping the opponent’s “bad” bishop, if this can help him in the fight for the open file. In contrast, the natural 20 \texttt{c}2 proves less effective after 20...\texttt{d}7!
but not 20...c8? 21 wxc8+! followed by checks on h8 and f7), e.g. 21 g6 c8 or 21 
xd7 xxd7 22 c7 xcc7 23 xc7 xf7 and Black defends.

20...wb8

If 20...a8, then 21 wc2! followed by 
wc7, just like in the game.

21 xbb7 xb7 22 wc2!

White prevents 22...c8, thus securing the open file. He is now ready for wc2-c7, invading the enemy camp.

22...e8

Or 22...d7 23 g6! followed by 24 wc7 with a clear advantage.

23 wc7 e7 24 wd6l h7

Parrying the threat of 25 g6.

25 h3 e8?!

25...e8 26 wd8 f6 offered more resistance; e.g. 27 c8 e8 28 c7 xd8 29 xb7 
e8 with modest counterplay.

26 c7 wa6

27 d7!

White gives up his strong knight in or-
der to enhance the attack on the black king.

27...xd7

On 27...e4 Polugaevsky had planned
28 e5! with the decisive threat of 29 f8+.

28 xdx7 g8 29 xex6 xa2 30 xf5+ h8

A pawn up with active pieces, White is winning. He now initiates a final attack.

31 g4! xb2 32 g5 b4 33 g6 f8 34 f7!

Before capturing on h6 White rules out 
34...f6. With mate imminent, Black re-
signed.

Example 47
L. Pachman-O. Jakobsen
Barcelona 1975

White is better thanks to his active pieces, but the tension along the open d-file makes it difficult for him to progress on the kingside. For example, if 26 e1 intending e3-g3, then 26...d3! with counterplay. Pachman finds a more subtle plan.

26 c3!

Intending 27 a5 in order to weaken Black's defence of the d-file.

26...bc8

Black could stop the bishop move to a5 by 26...wc7, but then after 27 e1 the rook transfer to g3 is inevitable, seeing as 27...d3? fails to 28 e4+

27 a5 xd1+ 28 xd1 e7

Preparing ...f6-d4 to obstruct the white rook.

29 f3!

An ingenious fork in the fight for the open file. Pachman has seen that after
Improving the Pieces

29...\(\text{wx}f3\) 30 \(\text{gxf3}\), followed by \(\text{\&d7}\), his active rook is a much more relevant factor than his pawn structure. On the other hand, if Black defends the f7-pawn by 29...\(\text{we}8\), then after 30 \(\text{wb7}\) the double threat of 31 \(\text{\&d7}\) and 31 \(\text{wxa}6\) is highly unpleasant.

29...\(\text{g8}\)

Jakobsen opts for a third solution: bring the king into the game.

30 \(\text{wx}c6\) \(\text{xc}6\) 31 \(\text{\&d7}\) \(\text{\&f8}\) 32 \(\text{\&b7}\) \(\text{\&e8}\) 33 \(\text{\&c3}\)!

Provoking a weakness on the kingside.

33...f6

After 33...\(\text{\&f6}\) 34 \(\text{\&xf6}\) \(\text{gxf6}\) 35 \(\text{\&b8+}\) followed by 36 \(\text{\&h8}\), White obtains a dangerous passed pawn.

34 \(\text{\&a7}\)!

Curiously, the rook on its own is restricting the movements of the whole black army.

34...\(\text{\&d6}\) 35 \(\text{\&f1}\) e5?

Now the light squares are seriously weakened. Preferable was 35...\(\text{c6}\) with a waiting game, or 35...\(\text{\&d3}\) 36 \(\text{\&e2}\) \(\text{\&d6}\) (the bishop was poisoned) in the same spirit.

36 \(\text{\&e2}\) \(\text{\&e6}\) 37 \(\text{g4}\)!

Fixing the enemy pawns on dark squares, just before Black manages to play 37...f5. As a result White's king may soon enter the enemy camp.

37...\(\text{\&b6}\) 38 \(\text{\&d3}\) \(\text{\&f7}\) 39 \(\text{\&e4}\) \(\text{\&e6}\) 40 \(\text{f3}\) \(\text{\&c6}\) 41 \(\text{\&b7}\) \(\text{\&f8}\) 42 \(\text{\&a5}\) \(\text{\&e7}\) 43 \(\text{\&b6}\)!

Black resigned. There could have followed 43...\(\text{\&xb6}\) (here or later, 43...\(\text{\&d6}\) allows 44 \(\text{\&f5}\) 44 \(\text{\&xb6}\) \(\text{\&d6}\) 45 a3! \(\text{\&f8}\) 46 \(\text{\&a5}\) \(\text{\&d6}\) 47 b4 and the passed pawn soon decides.

Example 48
Y. Grünfeld-Y. Kraidman
Gausdal 1982

[Diagram]

In this typical position from the Spanish, White applies a well-known idea from the encounter A. Karpov-W. Unzicker, Nice Olympiad 1974.

22 \(\text{\&a7}\)!

Grünfeld temporarily inserts his bishop on the a-file, in order to gain time for the tripling of the major pieces. A more relaxed line such as 22 \(\text{wa2}\) \(\text{\&c8}\) 23 \(\text{\&a1}\) (again, 23 \(\text{\&a7}\) is strong) permits 23...\(\text{xa3}\) 24 \(\text{\&xa3}\) \(\text{\&xc5}\) 25 \(\text{wa7}\) \(\text{\&xa7}\) 26 \(\text{\&xa7}\) \(\text{\&d8}\) followed by ...\(\text{\&b6}\) and Black defends.

22...\(\text{\&c7}\) 23 \(\text{wa2}\) \(\text{\&c8}\)

Due to the restrictive effect of the bishop on a7, unlike his opponent Black can't bring more major pieces to the a-file.
With 23...Ec8 he aims instead at improving his king’s knight by ...e8 and ...d7-c5.
24 Aa1 e8 25 b4!
Fighting against the enemy plan.
25...cxb3 26 wxb3 h5
On the search for counterplay. The tension along the a-file makes the desired 26...c5? lose a piece to 27 xxc5.
27 d3! wd7 28 c4!
Initiating action against Black’s cramped queenside. As for the bishop on a7, White is still awaiting the right moment for its withdrawal; besides it is being useful in taking the b8-square from the black rooks.
28...bxc4
Here or later 28...f4 29 f1 doesn’t make a big difference.
29 xxc4 d8 30 wb4
Grünfeld stops any tricks with 30...a5, which can now be met by 31 e3! ab8 32 b6 winning material.
30...g6
30...f4!? 31 f1 f5 seems preferable, as the text lets White invade via the b-file.
31 b1 c5 32 xc5! dxc5
Black is forced to weaken his pawn structure, since the intermediate 32 xxa3? fails to 33 fxe5! dxe5 34 wxa3, winning a pawn.
33 wb7!
Seizing the seventh rank.
33...xa3 34 xa3 f6
The e5-pawn needed protection, but now the a2-g8 diagonal falls into White’s hands.
35 c4! f8 36 d6! f4 37 xxd7 xxd7 38 b7
Thanks to his strong passed pawn and active rook, White is clearly better and went on to win the game.

Now let's move over to positions where there are not yet any open files on the board. The following example is about control of potentially open files, a subject that was observed already by Aaron Nimzowitsch in his legendary work My System.

Example 49
A.Lugovoi-V.Orlov
St. Petersburg 1996

White has a slight but stable advantage thanks to the weakness on d6. He now starts working on the d-file, aware that he can clear it by d4xc5 whenever desired.
14 Mad1 Mad8
From Black’s perspective, ...c5xd4? at any
moment would expose the d6-pawn after $\textsf{Ax}d4$. Therefore it is White who decides when to clear the d-file.

15 $\textsf{A}d2$!

In the same spirit of the previous move. Obviously 15 $d5?! e5$ would go against the logic of the position.

15...$\textsf{b}6$

Following 15...$\textsf{c}6$ 16 $\textsf{A}fd1$ Black would probably have to defend the c5-pawn by 16...$\textsf{b}6$ anyway, thus transposing to the game. 16...$\textsf{A}xe4$? 17 $\textsf{W}xe4$ $\textsf{b}6$, on the other hand, loses a pawn after 18 $\textsf{W}b7! \textsf{W}xb7$ 19 $\textsf{A}xb7 \textsf{c}7$ 20 $\textsf{d}xc5$.

16 $\textsf{A}fd1 \textsf{c}6$ 17 $\textsf{d}xc5$

Having activated his rooks White proceeds with the clearance of the d-file. Black can’t avoid this, since both 17...$\textsf{b}xc5$? and 17...$\textsf{A}xc5$? drop the d6-pawn, while 17...$\textsf{A}xe4$? fails to the intermediate 18 $\textsf{e}xd6$ winning a pawn.

17...$\textsf{d}xc5$ 18 $\textsf{A}d6$!

Thanks to the prior doubling of rooks Lugovoi is able to install the knight on $d6$, where it dominates the whole board.

18...$\textsf{A}xg2$

If 18...$\textsf{A}d7$, preparing 19...$\textsf{A}fd8$, then 19 $\textsf{A}xc6 \textsf{W}xc6$ 20 $\textsf{A}f5! \textsf{A}xd2$ 21 $\textsf{A}e7+$ $\textsf{A}h8$ 22 $\textsf{W}xd2 \textsf{W}c7$ 23 $\textsf{W}d7$, followed by $\textsf{A}c6$, with a clear endgame advantage.

19 $\textsf{A}xg2 \textsf{A}b4$ 20 $\textsf{A}b5$

This fork helps White seize the open file.

20...$\textsf{W}b7+$ 21 $f3$

21 $\textsf{W}f3$? looks even stronger; e.g. 21...$\textsf{W}xf3+$ 22 $\textsf{W}xf3 \textsf{A}xd2$ 23 $\textsf{A}xd2 \textsf{A}xa2$ 24 $\textsf{A}xa7$ followed by 25 $\textsf{A}d7$.

21...$\textsf{A}xd2$ 22 $\textsf{W}xd2$!

Just like in several of the previous examples, the stronger side recaptures with the queen, so as to be able to invade on the seventh rank later on.

22...$a6$?!

Now the $b6$-pawn becomes a serious weakness. Black should have continued 22...$\textsf{A}xa2$ 23 $\textsf{A}a1$ $a6$ 24 $\textsf{A}d6 \textsf{W}b8$! 25 $\textsf{A}xa2 \textsf{A}d8$ 26 $\textsf{A}xa6$ $g6$, restoring the material balance on the next move with just a slight disadvantage. Obviously such lines are easier to work out after than during the game.

23 $\textsf{A}c3 \textsf{A}c6$ 24 $\textsf{W}d7$!

A familiar pattern: after securing the open file, the stronger side seizes the seventh rank.

24...$\textsf{W}xd7$ 25 $\textsf{A}xd7 \textsf{A}b8$

Or 25...$\textsf{A}d8$ 26 $\textsf{A}xd8+$ $\textsf{A}xd8$ 27 $\textsf{A}a4$ and White wins a pawn. In the game we will soon reach the same situation.

26 $\textsf{A}d6! \textsf{A}b4$ 27 $a3 \textsf{A}c2$ 28 $\textsf{A}f2 \textsf{A}f8$ 29 $\textsf{A}a4$!

Having neutralized the enemy knight.
threats, White is ready to pick up the pawn.
29...b5 30 cxb5 axb5 31 \( \text{\texttt{bxc5}} \)

Lugovoi later converted his extra pawn into a win.

The next three examples feature the clearance of a file as a strategical method.

**Example 50**
C.Garcia Palermo-J.Bibiloni
Buenos Aires 1998

![Chess diagram]

In an Orthodox Queen's Gambit Black swapped knights with ...\( \text{\texttt{e4xc3}} \) somewhat too early, and White is now able to clear the c-file for his major pieces.

15 c4! \( \text{\texttt{b7}} \)

White is also noticeably better after 15...dxc4 16 \( \text{\texttt{xc4 b7}} \) 17 e4, thanks to his strong pawn centre that may soon move forward.

16 cxd5 cxd5 17 \( \text{\texttt{fc1}} \)

The last piece enters the game, joining the battle for the c-file.

17...\( \text{\texttt{f8}} \)

In the event of 17...\( \text{\texttt{c8}} \) White could consider 18 \( \text{\texttt{c7}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e7}} \) 19 \( \text{\texttt{a4}} \) with pressure on Black's queenside. In the game, Black instead aims at covering the c7-square with the knight from e6.

18 \( \text{\texttt{b5 e7}} \) 19 \( \text{\texttt{c7}} \)

Diverting the queen from the d-file, so that ...\( \text{\texttt{e6}} \) at any moment can be met by \( \text{\texttt{d6}} \), trapping the rook.

19...\( \text{\texttt{c8}} \) 20 \( \text{\texttt{b3}} \)

White utilizes his "blocking bishop" to triple the major pieces, an idea we already came across in Grünfeld-Kraido n (p. 65).

20...\( \text{\texttt{e6}} \) 21 \( \text{\texttt{c3 c8}} \) 22 \( \text{\texttt{d3 g6}} \) 23 h3

Also interesting was 23 \( \text{\texttt{e5}} \)? preparing f4-f5, when Black might soon have to hand over the bishop pair by ...\( \text{\texttt{xe5}} \). In the game Garcia Palermo prefers to improve his position slowly, conscious that he is much better in the long run, thanks to his control of the only open file.

23...\( \text{\texttt{g7}} \) 24 \( \text{\texttt{a4}} \) 25 \( \text{\texttt{g3}} \)

Finally the bishop is withdrawn to enable 26 \( \text{\texttt{c7}} \).

25...a6 26 \( \text{\texttt{c7}} \) b5 27 \( \text{\texttt{b4 ae8}} \) 28 a4

Thanks to his active pieces, White keeps a clear plus.

**Example 51**
G.Stahlberg-M.Taimanov
Candidates Tournament, Zürich
1953

![Chess diagram]
At first sight White seems to have the more active position, with the desired e2-e4 advance just about to take place.

10...b5!

A strong move with various virtues: it gains space, prepares to dislocate the enemy knight by ...b5-b4, and produces a structure with an open c-file where the bishop on g2 tends to lose strength.

11 cxb5 cxb5 12 \textbf{d}1 b4

Unblocking the bishop and preventing the advance e2-e4.

13 \textbf{b}1?!

This passive retreat just complicates White’s development. The natural 13 \textbf{a}4! led to a approximate equality after 13...\textbf{c}6 14 \textbf{x}c6 \textbf{x}c6 15 \textbf{g}5 followed by \textbf{c}1.

13...\textbf{c}6 14 \textbf{xc}6 \textbf{xc}6 15 \textbf{d}2 \textbf{wb}6!

This is a clever attack on the d4-pawn, just when White was about to play the advance 16 e4.

16 e3?

A serious positional error that buries the bishop on c1 and delays the battle for the open file. By 16 \textbf{b}3 \textbf{ac}8 17 \textbf{g}5 followed by \textbf{c}1, and hopefully \textbf{c}5 one day, White could still fight for equality.

16...\textbf{ac}8 17 \textbf{f}1 \textbf{bc}6!

Simple and strong. We can already imagine the invasion at c2.

18 \textbf{xa}6 \textbf{xa}6 19 \textbf{f}3 \textbf{fc}8 20 \textbf{b}3 \textbf{e}4 21 \textbf{d}2 \textbf{c}2!

Black could have won material by 21...\textbf{x}c1 22 \textbf{ax}c1 \textbf{xd}2, but Taimanov prefers to seize the second rank with his rook, where it keeps the enemy pieces on a1 and c1 out of play.

22 \textbf{xe}4 \textbf{dxe}4 23 a3 \textbf{h}5!

Opening a second front with ideas like ...h4-h3 and ...\textbf{b}5-f5-f3 attacking the white king. Black later won.

\textbf{Example 52}

T.V.Petrosian-D.Bronstein
USSR Spartakiad, Moscow 1967

White appears to be better thanks to his
space advantage and the active knight on e5. However, a closer look reveals that Black has a dangerous plan at his disposal: ...f7-f6 and ...e6-e5 to seize the centre and open up the position for the bishop pair. Thus White needs to proceed energetically.

**19 Bb1!**

Petrosian prepares b4-b5 in order to clear the b-file, thus creating a target for his pieces on b7.

**19...f6**

In the event of slower moves such as 19...Wc7, White could adjust his plans slightly with 20 a4 followed by b4-b5, in order to create a passed pawn.

**20 Qd3 Qf7**

**21 b5!**

In contrast to the previous note, after 21 a4?!! Re8 22 b5 e5! Black now achieves his plan, with good play. So Petrosian hurries to carry on with his own plan.

**21...Wc7**

After 21...a5?! 22 b6, followed by Qb5, the knight gets interesting prospects at d6 and c7.

**22 bxa6 bxa6**

If 22...Rx a6?!, then 23 Qb5, heading for the excellent d6-square.

**23 Bb6!**

A nice and logical move. From b6 the rook not only helps White in the battle for the b-file, it will also control the whole sixth rank in case Black goes ...e6-e5.

**23...e5**

Or 23...Bfb8 24 Wb3 followed by 25 Bb1 and White takes command of the open file.

**24 dxe5 fxe5**

Thus Black fulfilled his plan. However, White’s superior piece activity makes him well prepared for a tactical battle, and this is where Petrosian takes the game with his next move.

**25 Qxe5! Wxc5**

After 25...Bxe5 26 Qxd5 White recovers the material straight away.

**26 Cc6 Wa7**

Now after 27 Qxf7?! Bxf7 not only the d5-pawn will be hanging, but also the one on f2. Thus Petrosian prefers a direct attack on Black’s king, exploiting the range of the rook on b6.

**27 Qg4! Wh8 28 Qxh6 Qe8**

With double threats against c6 and f2; however...

**29 Bxe8!! Bxe8+**

Or 29...Bfxe8 30 Wh5 with similar play as in the game.

**30 Wh2 Bxe8 31 Wh5! We1 32 Qf5+ Qg8 33 Qxg7 Qf1 34 Wh8+**

Black resigns.
In the second half of the previous example, we witnessed the strength of a rook controlling a whole rank. Let’s see a few more examples related to this subject.

**Example 53**  
E.Agrest-S.Brynell  
European Team Championship,  
Gothenburg 2005

In a typical isolated queen’s pawn structure White launches a strong rook manoeuvre.

**15 **\( \text{Na3!} \)**

Heading for g3 or h3 to enhance an attack on the black king.

**15 ...\( \text{We7} \)**

This seems a little slow, but it is not easy to find a satisfactory defence. For example, after 15...b6 16 \( \text{Rah3} \) \( \text{b7} \) 17 d5! (not 17 \( \text{Wh5?!} \) \( \text{e4} \) and Black defends) 17...\( \text{xd5} \) 18 \( \text{Wh5} \) h6 19 \( \text{xe6} \) White obtains a decisive attack – Brynell; and 15...\( \text{d7} \), preparing ...\( \text{c6} \), can be met in the very same way, starting with 16 \( \text{h3} \).

**16 \( \text{g4} \)**

White aims to swap the defender on f6, a logical idea after 15...\( \text{We7} \) since Black will have to move his queen again. Neverthe-

less, the simple 16 \( \text{h3} \)? might have been even stronger.

**16 ...\( \text{d7} \) 17 \( \text{xf6+} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 18 \( \text{g3} \)!**

Now this is the preferred file for the rook, in order to support the \( \text{c1-g5} \) idea.

**18 ...\( \text{xa4?} \)**

This leads to immediate defeat. 18...h6? was also bad due to 19 \( \text{d2} \) with a double threat at h6 and b4; but 18...\( \text{fc8} \) 19 \( \text{g5} \) \( \text{f5} \) 20 \( \text{h6} \) g6 could have prolonged Black’s resistance – Brynell.

**19 b3 \( \text{c6} \) 20 d5!**

With the deadly idea of 21 \( \text{b2} \).

**20 ...\( \text{xd5} \) 21 \( \text{b2} \) \( \text{Wh6} \)**

**22 \( \text{xe7} \)**

Even stronger was 22 \( \text{e5} \) f6 23 \( \text{xe6+} \), winning a piece.

**22 ...\( \text{xg7} \) 23 \( \text{xg7} \) + \( \text{xg7} \) 24 \( \text{e5+} \) f6**

Or 24...\( \text{g8} \) 25 \( \text{d4} \) with a decisive attack.

**25 \( \text{xe6} \)**

White soon realized his material plus.

**Example 54**  
A.Khalifman-P.Leko  
Ubeda 1997

While the previous example showed the seizure of a rank as an attacking method,
here we will see it in a more general context. Black aims to exploit the semi-open f-file by moves like ...\( \mathcal{D}f4 \) and ...\( \mathcal{W}f6 \), with quite some activity on the kingside. In respect to this plan, Khalifman launches a powerful rook manoeuvre.

\[
18 \mathcal{X}b1 \mathcal{X}f7
\]

After \( 18...\mathcal{D}f4?! \) 19 \( \mathcal{X}b7+ \mathcal{G}g8 \) 20 h4 Black lacks a good answer to the threat 21 g3. Instead, by \( 18...\mathcal{X}f7 \) Leko prevents 19 \( \mathcal{X}b7+ \) and prepares the doubling of rooks.

\[
19 \mathcal{X}b3!
\]

The rook is directed to d3 where it will put pressure on the d6-pawn and, at the same time, assist in the kingside defence.

\[
19...\mathcal{D}f4 20 h4 h6
\]

If 20...e5, intending \( ...\mathcal{D}e6-d4 \), then 21 \( \mathcal{D}g5! \mathcal{E}e7 \) 22 g3 \( \mathcal{D}e6 \) 23 \( \mathcal{D}xe6+ \mathcal{X}xe6 \) 24 \( \mathcal{W}d5! \) with a clear edge — Khalifman.

\[
21 g3 \mathcal{D}h5 22 \mathcal{X}d3 \mathcal{W}f6
\]

At this point 23 \( \mathcal{X}e3 \) looks interesting in order to reinforce f3, thus renewing the attack on the d6-pawn. But perhaps Black might get some counterplay with 23...\( \mathcal{X}b8?! \) 24 \( \mathcal{X}xd6 \mathcal{X}b2 \). Khalifman prefers a more technical solution.

\[
23 e5!
\]

White no longer wins a pawn but clears the files for both rooks and fixes the e6 and c5 pawns as future targets.

\[
23...dxe5 24 \mathcal{X}xe5 \mathcal{W}b8
\]

Leko sacrifices a pawn for the sake of counterplay. Passive defence with 24...\( \mathcal{X}c8 \), intending 25...\( \mathcal{X}c6 \), is well met by 25 \( \mathcal{W}e2 \) \( \mathcal{X}c6 \) 26 \( \mathcal{X}xh5! \) gxh5 27 \( \mathcal{D}e5 \) with a decisive advantage — Khalifman.

\[
25 \mathcal{W}e2!
\]

Preventing 25...\( \mathcal{X}b2 \) and increasing the pressure on e6.

\[
25...\mathcal{D}h7 26 \mathcal{X}xe6 \mathcal{W}f5 27 \mathcal{D}e7!
\]

A pawn up, White is happy to exchange pieces.

\[
27...\mathcal{X}b1+ 28 \mathcal{D}h2
\]

Avoiding 28 \( \mathcal{G}g2? \) \( \mathcal{D}f4+! \) 29 \( \mathcal{X}xf4 \) \( \mathcal{W}g4+ \) 30 \( \mathcal{H}h2 \) \( \mathcal{X}xf4+ \) with a perpetual.

\[
28...\mathcal{D}g7 29 \mathcal{X}xf7 \mathcal{W}xf7 30 \mathcal{D}d5 \mathcal{W}b7 31 \mathcal{G}g2!\]

Another technical choice. 31 \( \mathcal{X}xc5?! \) permits 31...\( \mathcal{X}b2 \) with unnecessary counterplay.

\[
31...\mathcal{W}b2
\]

Now that the f2-pawn is safe White can meet 31...\( \mathcal{X}b2 \) with 32 \( \mathcal{W}d3! \), threatening 33 \( \mathcal{D}d7 \) as well as 33 h5.

\[
32 \mathcal{W}xb2 \mathcal{X}xb2 33 \mathcal{D}d2
\]

Securing the extra pawn. Khalifman won the ending without major problems.

Of all the ranks the seventh (or second in White’s camp) keeps special importance due
to its proximity to the enemy pawns and king. In the previous examples we often came across the seizure of the seventh rank, usually as a consequence of controlling a file. Here is a final example on this topic.

**Example 55**
*M. Petursson-P. Lyrberg*
Reykjavik 1996

22 c5!

A strong pawn sacrifice to seize the seventh rank. In contrast, 22 e5?! wxc4 is less clear.

22...dxc5 23 dxc5 dxc5 24 d7 wb6 25 f5!

With the opponent completely paralysed, White directs his attention to the black king.

25...exf5

In this way Black brings his queen to the defence. If instead 25...g7, then White could try 26 f2! with the strong threat of 27 fxe6 fxe6 28 e7!, heading for e8.

26 exf5 wxf6 27 f4 a8 28 d5

White has no problems with giving up another pawn, conscious of his great attacking potential.

28...wxf5 29 h6!

The tempting 29 e5? permits 29...c6!

30 f6+ g7 with a draw – Petursson. Instead, in the game White creates the strong threat of 30 f1.

29...w6?

Black should have returned some material: e.g. 29...c6 30 f1 e8 31 d1 e6 32 f6+ h8 33 xe8 xe8 34 xf8 xf8 35 xb7 with a clear, yet not decisive advantage – Petursson.

30 wxe6!

Although it is not that easy to foresee at this very moment, White now forces a winning endgame.

30...xe6 31 f6+ h8 32 xf7 g7 33 xg7+ xg7 34 d7 f8 35 xb7 xf7 36 e7

Despite material equality, Black resigned – and not too early! The point is that he can never free his pieces due to the mating threats, whereas White will just bring his king to the queenside and eliminate the pawns on c5 and a6 with an easy win.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 307.

**The queen**

As any chess player knows, the queen is a terrific attacking piece. This virtue is well illustrated in the following example.
Example 56
B. Spassky-G. Capellan
Solingen 1974

In a tense position with attacks on opposite flanks Black has just played 15...d4, perhaps hoping for 16 Qxd4?! Qxd4 17 exf6 Qxf4! 18 Qxf4 Qxf4 with roughly equal chances in the endgame.

16 Wh2!

Spassky is not interested in simplifications and directs his queen to the kingside.

16...dxc3 17 exf6

26 fxg7! Qxg7

After 26...Wh4 27 g8+ Wh6 28 Wh8+ Black is mated, while on 26...Qc2+ White avoids 27 Qa4?? Qd7+, preferring 27 Qb2!.

27 Qg8+! Qxg8 28 Wh6 Qc6 29 Qc5! Qe7 30 Qe4 Qd5 31 g5!

Preparing 32 Qf6+ when the queen is finally able to give mate. Black resigned.

Another common task for the queen is to control files and diagonals, alone or accompanied by other pieces. We already came across this subject in Grünfeld-Kraidman and Garcia Palermo-Bibiloni.

17...Qb4?

Now White's attack becomes too strong. 17...cxb2+ 18 Qxb2! (the natural 18 Qb1?!
Let's see a few more examples.

**Example 57**
T.Luther-Y.Gonzalez Vidal
Havana 2004

White is clearly better thanks to his space advantage, but how can he make progress?

45 \(	ext{Nh}2!\)
Preparation \(\text{We}1-h1\) to increase h-file pressure.

45...\text{Be}7 46 \text{We}1 \text{Wc}7 47 \text{Wh}1 \text{a}8 48 \text{f}1!
Preparing an exchange sacrifice on h7.

48...\text{g}7
In the event of passive defence with 48...\text{b}8, Gonzalez indicates 49 \text{d}2 \text{a}8 50 \text{f}3 \text{b}8 51 \text{xh}7! \text{xh}7 52 \text{xf}6 \text{xh}2 53 \text{xh}2 followed by 54 \text{xg}5 with a winning advantage. In the game, White manages to enter the enemy camp with one of his rooks.

49 \text{h}6! \text{Gf}7 50 \text{g}6 \text{Wb}7 51 \text{g}8 \text{e}8 52 \text{h}8 \text{ee}7 53 \text{d}2 \text{b}8 54 \text{f}3 \text{a}8 55 \text{c}1!
Withdrawning the queen, so that it won't get exposed after White's next move.

55...\text{b}8 56 \text{xh}7! \text{xh}7 57 \text{xf}8 \text{ef}7 58 \text{g}8
Intending 59 \text{g}6 with a winning ad-

**Example 58**
V.Smyslov-B.Spassky
Leningrad-Moscow match 1959

White has a considerable advantage thanks to his bishop pair and more active pieces. By a subtle queen manoeuvre Smyslov manages to step up the pressure.

16 \text{We}1!
The queen is heading for f2, where it will reinforce the g1-a7 diagonal as well as the f-file after a future f4-f5.

16...b6?
The pawn advances just one step in or-
der not to weaken c5; however, Black’s main priority was to drive the bishop on c4 from the attack. After 16...b5 17 𑙽e2 𑙽e8 18 𑙽f2 𑙽ab8 19 f5 White has a clear, but not decisive advantage; e.g. 19...e5 20 f6 gxf6 21 𑙽xf6 𑙽d6 and the game continues. 

17 𑙽f2 𑙽db8

This looks odd, but Black couldn’t play 17...ibrated due to 18 𑙽xa6.

18 f5! 𑙽c8

Or 18...exf5? 19 𑙽f4, when 19...𑙽e5 fails to 20 𑙽xf7+.

19 𑙽d4!

The knight joins the attack. The straightforward 19 f6!? looks strong as well; e.g. 19...缣g6 20 fxg7 缣ge5 21 𑙽xb6 with a decisive advantage.

19...缣xd4

After 19...exf5 20 exf5 Black can’t avoid 21 f6.

20 𑙽xd4 𑙽c6 21 fxe6 𑙽xe6 22 𑙽xe6

Spassky resigned, in view of 22...𑙽xe6 23 𑙽xc6 𑙽xc6 24 𑙽xf7+ with mate.

Example 59

A.Khruschiov-L.Psakhis

Pardubice 2002

Winawer Black undertakes a strong manoeuvre, and a rather surprising one the first time you see it.

12...𑙽d7!

The king passes to the queenside, where it will feel quite safe thanks to the restrictive force of the bishop on a4. Conversely, after 12...0-0?! 13 g3, followed by 𑙽h4 and 𑙽h5 or f4-f5, White obtains attacking prospects.

13 g3 𑙽g8!

The queen is heading for h7, where it will take command of the b1-h7 diagonal and increase the pressure on the c2-pawn.

14 𑙽g2?!

With this pawn structure White is unable to develop this bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal, but even so g2 is hardly the best square. Preferable was 14 h4!? preparing 𑙽h3, e.g. 14...𑙽h7 15 𑙽a2 𑙽a6 16 𑙽h3 𑙽c7 17 𑙽h2! 𑙽b5 18 𑙽e3 𑙽f5 19 𑙽f3 with far more activity than in the game.

14...𑙽h7 15 𑙽e2 𑙽a6!

Stronger than the natural 15...𑙽bc6, since the knight now finds an excellent outpost on b5.

16 𑙽d2 𑙽c7 17 𑙽b2 𑙽ag8

Slowly preparing a kingside attack.

18 h4 𑙽f5 19 𑙽c1

The prophylactic 19 𑙽h2!? seems better
here; e.g. 19...g5 20 h1 g6 21 g1 with more resistance than in the game.

19...c8!

Before rolling out the attack Psakhis improves his position on the other flank.

20 a2 b5 21 b2 a5

Of course not 21...xa3? 22 b4 or 22 a2 and White wins a piece.

22 b1 b7 23 h2 g5!

24 hxg5?

This just accelerates Black’s attack. Also ineffective was 24 h5? g4, but 24 g4 Wh7 25 h5 would have helped White resist. There might follow 25...e8 26 f3 Whf8 27 b2 c6 28 be1 a6! (securing the king) followed by 29...f5 with an initiative.

24...hxg5 25 f1 g4 26 e3 Wh5 27 e1

If 27 xc4? then 27...Wh2+ 28 f1 Wh1+! 29 xh1 xh1+ 30 g2 Wh8 with mate.

27...a6!

Black safeguards the king and avoids any tricks with 28 xc4.

28 b2 f5 29 bxc1 h7!

Preparing 30...g8 with a strong attack.

In the previous example we saw the queen alone taking command of a whole diagonal. This idea becomes even stronger if she is accompanied by a bishop – the so-called battery, which is a basic weapon in attacking positions.

Example 60

A.Dreev-E.Sveshnikov
Russian Team Championship 1992

22...xd4!

Black sacrifices the exchange in order to mount a dangerous attack along the h1-a8 diagonal. 22...xd4?! 23 xd4 wc6 24 d1! repelling the attack, but not 24 ac1? xd4! and Black wins.

23 xd4

Black also enjoys a strong attack after 23 exd4 wc6 24 f3 xf3+ 25 xf3 xf3.

23...xd4 24 exd4 wc6 25 d5

Only by desperate means is White able to prolong resistance.

25 xd5 f3 xd1+ 27 xd1 xf3+ 28 xf3 xd3 29 d2

And here White lost on time. The game could have concluded 29...h1+ 30 f2 g2+ 31 e1 (or 31 e3 f3+ 32 d4 wc3 mate) 31...g1+ 32 e2 a6! 33 f3 h1+ 34 g4 e4+ 35 h3 f1+ and Black wins – Sveshnikov.
Finally, an example that shows the great mobility of the queen, which lets her change working area with remarkable speed.

**Example 61**
V.Smyslov-V.Simagin
Moscow 1967

White is clearly better thanks to his active pieces and Black's deficient pawn structure, in particular the e6-pawn. Having noticed that his queen isn't really doing anything on the kingside, Smyslov opts for her transfer to the opposite flank, in order to open up a second front.

32 \( \textit{b1} \textit{h8} \) 33 \( \textit{w3} \textit{g7} \)

Trying for a counterattack, but now the e6-pawn becomes exposed. However, a more solid defence such as 33...\( \textit{e8} \) 34 \( \textit{a2} \textit{c8} \) also led to problems after 35 \( \textit{w3} \textit{b3} \), with the double threat of 36 \( \textit{wxb7} \) and 36 \( \textit{wxb4} \) followed by 37 \( \textit{d6} \).

34 \( \textit{w3} \textit{b3} \) 35 \( \textit{b6} \)

Unfortunately for Black any defence of the b7-pawn implies some concession. If 34...\( \textit{b6} \)? then 35 \( \textit{e5} \), while both 34...\( \textit{b5} \)?! 35 \( \textit{a4} \) and 34...\( \textit{b6} \) 35 \( \textit{c2} \) \( \textit{xc2} \) 36 \( \textit{wxc2} \) are followed by \( \textit{c8}(+) \) and \( \textit{c6} \), leaving his queenside too exposed.

35 \( \textit{w3} \textit{c3} \)

Smyslov exploits the fact that the c-file has become temporarily available and now threatens 36 \( \textit{w3} \textit{c8} \)+. Black can't prevent this by 35...\( \textit{c6} \)? due to 36 \( \textit{w3} \textit{b4} \) winning a pawn.

35...\( \textit{g8} \)?

A bad oversight. Black had to try 35...\( \textit{g8} \) 36 \( \textit{w3} \textit{c8} \) \( \textit{f8} \), when the tempting 37 \( \textit{e5} \)? fails to 37...\( \textit{f3} \), but 37 \( \textit{g6} \) \( \textit{c6} \) 38 \( \textit{w3} \textit{b8} \) followed by 39 \( \textit{e5} \) leaves White remains clearly on top.

36 \( \textit{w3} \textit{c8} \)

Incapable of saving both the rook and the knight, Black resigned.

For the related exercises, see page 311.

**The king**

As beginners we are taught to castle quickly in order to secure the king and bring the rook into the game. Indeed, it would be illogical not to exploit such a powerful move, that lets us improve two pieces at the same time. Thus in many openings, castling is made almost automatically, in particular to the short side. Here we will see some examples where it is less clear if, when, and to which side to castle.
Example 62
N.Short-B.Gulko
Candidates match (game 3), New York 1994

24...e5 25 h5+ h7 26 f4 h8 27 g5+!

Black resigned in view of 27...hxg5 28 f6+ g6 29 xg5 mate, while 27...g6 28 d3! followed by 29 g3 soon leads to the same thing. Finally on 27...g8 Short indicates 28 f6+ xf6 (or 28...g7 29 gh7! intending g3 mate) 29 xh6 xg5 30 xg5+ h7 31 d3 and wins.

Example 63
J.Rosito-J.Hellsten
Mendoza 2005

20...h7

Or 20...h8 21 h4! g7 22 e4 e7 23 f4 heading for h5 with a strong attack - Short.
21 e4 f5

If 21...e7, then 22 xf6+ xf6 23 c2+ h8 24 e4 and wins.
22 f6+ h8 23 h4 g7 24 ad1!

The last piece enters the game, with ideas like d4(+) and d3-g3.

In contrast to the previous example, here the option of long castling is discarded. So why not go 15...0-0 right away,
securing the king and bringing the last piece into play? Well, it transpires that after 16 \( \text{AXB7 AXB7} \) 17 \( \text{Qf4!} \) White obtains a dangerous attack, with ideas such as 18 \( \text{Qf6, 18 Qf6+} \) and 18 \( \text{Qd6}. \) Thus I decided to postpone castling until a safer moment.

15...\( \text{Ad4} \! \)

A strong move, fighting for the key square e4.

16 \( \text{AXB7} \)

Now after 16 \( \text{f6} \) 0-0! Black doesn’t have to fear the enemy attack, since the white knight isn’t participating. In the game Rosito prepares its transfer via e4.

16...\( \text{Wxb7} \) 17 f3 h6!

Asking the question of the bishop before castling. 17...0-0?! is still dangerous due to 18 \( \text{Qe4 Qd5} \) (or 18...\( \text{Qxe5} \) 19 \( \text{Qxc5} \) with multiple threats) 19 c3!, intending 19...\( \text{Ad3?} \) 20 \( \text{Qf2} \).

18 \( \text{axe3} \)

After 18 \( \text{Qf6} \) 0-0 19 \( \text{Qe4 Qd5} \) 20 c3 (here, and on the next move, 20 \( \text{Qxc5?} \) fails to 20...\( \text{Wxb6} \) 20...\( \text{Ad3} \) 21 \( \text{wh1 Wb6} \) intending...c5-c4, Black also manages to neutralize the enemy attack with level play.

18...\( \text{Cc4} \) 19 \( \text{Qe4 Qxe5} \)

Just in time, before White lands a knight on d6. Now White wins the exchange, but Black obtains ample compensation.

20 c3 \( \text{Qd5} \) 21 b3?

A tactical oversight in a complex position. After 21 \( \text{Ad1 Wc6} \) 22 b3 \( \text{Qxc3!} \) 23 \( \text{Qxc3 Qxc3} \) 24 \( \text{d2 Qd4+} \) 25 \( \text{Wxh1 Kh5} \) followed by...0-0 Black has no problems, but the text leaves White simply worse.

21...\( \text{Qxc3} \) 22 \( \text{Qxc3 Qxc3} \)

Black recovers the exchange at once, thus keeping the extra pawn.

23 \( \text{Qxc5 Qxa1} \) 24 \( \text{Qxa1 Wc7}! \)

Heading for e5. Despite certain difficulties in mobilizing the rook, Black is clearly better thanks to the extra pawn and superior activity.

25 b4

The strongest reply, since both 25 \( \text{Ac1}\) and 25 \( \text{Qd4?!} \) run into 25...\( \text{Qf4} \) with double threats.

25...\( \text{We5} \) 26 \( \text{Ad1 We2} \) 27 \( \text{Qa1 We5} \) 28 \( \text{Qd1 We2} \) 29 \( \text{Qa1 Qf4} \) 30 \( \text{Wg3} \)

Here the game continued with 30...\( \text{We5?!} \) 31 \( \text{Qe1 Wg5} \) 32 \( \text{Qd4!} \) 0-0 33 \( \text{Wxg5 hxg5} \) 34 \( \text{Qf6} \) and White recovered the pawn. Instead, by 30...g5 31 \( \text{Wh1 Qd7!} \) preparing...\( \text{Qc6-b7} \) and...\( \text{Ad8} \), Black could have secured his king without dropping the pawn, while his active queen restricts the enemy counterplay. In conclusion, when resolving the “king problem” be as flexible as possible!
Now let's examine two cases where Black deliberately dismisses both castling options, and finds a better destiny for the king.

**Example 64**

G.Kasparov-A.Karpov
Linares 1994

Instead, the game continued 24...\(\texttt{h}b8?!\)
25 g3! \(\texttt{w}xd3+\) 26 \(\texttt{a}xd3\) b4 27 \(\texttt{a}a1\) bxa3 28 bxa3 \(\texttt{a}b3\) 29 \(\texttt{c}c2\) \(\texttt{a}xa3\) 30 \(\texttt{a}xa3\) \(\texttt{a}xa3\) 31 \(\texttt{a}a1\) \(\texttt{b}b2\) 32 \(\texttt{a}xa4\) \(\texttt{a}xa4\) 33 \(\texttt{a}xa4\) \(\texttt{a}xe4\) 34 f4 and with play on a single flank, Kasparov easily held his own despite the minus pawn.

25 \(\texttt{a}xf4\) \(\texttt{a}xf4\) 26 \(\texttt{w}xc4\)

If 26 \(\texttt{cd}1\), then 26...\(\texttt{hd}8!\) with serious pressure on the d4-pawn.

26...\(\texttt{bx}c4\) 27 \(\texttt{b}b1\) \(\texttt{hd}8\) 28 \(\texttt{hd}1\) \(\texttt{g}5!\)

Intending ...\(\texttt{f}7\)-f5 and ....\(\texttt{f}6\) with pressure on the weaknesses on d4 and b2. Black has much the better game and the contrast to the initial position is striking.

**Example 65**

T.V.Petrosian-M.Botvinnik
Training match, Moscow 1952

At first sight the position appears somewhat troublesome for Black. He can't play 22...0-0?? due to 23 \(\texttt{wh}7\) mate, and 22...0-0-0? 23 \(\texttt{c}c1\) is also bad for him. Karpov finds a third solution.

22...\(\texttt{e}e7!\)

An excellent move. On e7 the king is relatively safe and the king's rook can enter the game.

23 \(\texttt{c}c1\) \(\texttt{c}c4!\)

The queen's exchange clearly favours Black, since it finishes off any white attacking prospects and leaves the king on e7 well placed for the endgame.

24 \(\texttt{e}e2?!\)

Following the opponent's example, but now Black manages further favourable simplifications. Karpov suggests 24 g3! and only then 25 \(\texttt{e}e2\), thus preventing any black bishop or knight move to f4.

24...\(\texttt{f}f4!\)

Here we will see the same idea in a more aggressive context. Black has already started a kingside advance but, before continuing it, he has to respond to the threat of 17 \(\texttt{d}d6+\). Botvinnik finds the most appealing solution.

16...\(\texttt{f}f8!\)

A safe square for the king, while the rook remains active on h8.

17 \(\texttt{f}f1\)
Trying to improve the passive knight. 17  
\( \text{d6? } \text{wb8} \) was useless, while 17 0-0?! permits 17...g4! followed by ...f7-f5 and ...h5-h4 with an attack.

17...g4 18  \( \text{d2 e5!} \)

Clearing the position for the bishop pair.

19  \( \text{wb3?!} \)

Now the d4-pawn turns into a problem. Preferable was 19 dxe5  \( \text{xe5} \) 20  \( \text{e2} \) with a passive, yet solid position.

19...exd4 20  \( \text{xd4} \)  \( \text{xd4} \) 21  \( \text{exd4} \)  \( \text{we7+} \)

Of course not 21...\( \text{xd4?!} \) 22  \( \text{wb4+} \).

22  \( \text{d1?!} \)

Petrosian hopes to escape with the king to b1, but there is no time for this. 22  \( \text{f1} \) was better.

22...\( \text{xd4} \) 23  \( \text{c7} \)

Neither 23  \( \text{xb7? a4+} \) nor 23  \( \text{xd5? xb2} \), followed by 24...\( \text{a4} \), worked for White – Botvinnik.

23...\( \text{b6} \) 24  \( \text{e1} \)  \( \text{d6} \) 25  \( \text{xb7} \)  \( \text{h6}! \)

Heading for f6, where the rook will defend f7 and attack f2 at the same time. Much worse was 25...\( \text{xf2?} \) 26  \( \text{f1} \) followed by  \( \text{e4} \), or 25...\( \text{c8?} \) 26  \( \text{e4!} \) with dangerous counterplay.

26  \( \text{b5 e6} \) 27  \( \text{f4 gxf3} \) 28  \( \text{xf3} \)  \( \text{c8} \)

The last piece enters the game with a clear advantage. The difference between the two kings is striking.

29  \( \text{e5} \)  \( \text{c5?!} \)

29...\( \text{d4} \) was a much simpler continuation, whereas White should have preferred 30  \( \text{b4} \) on the next move.

30  \( \text{xf7+? g8!} \) 31  \( \text{f3} \)  \( \text{c1+} \) 32  \( \text{e2} \)  \( \text{c2+} \)

33  \( \text{f1} \)  \( \text{d2}! \)

White resigned in view of the continuation 34  \( \text{e2} \)  \( \text{d4} \).

In the previous example we saw Petrosian trying to secure his king by  \( \text{d1-c2-b1} \), and in my game with Rosito I missed a similar option with  \( \text{d7-c6-b7} \). Such king marches are indeed quite frequent in practice, particularly in closed positions such as the following one.

Example 66

V. Anand - J. Timman

Tilburg 1991

![Chess Diagram]

Black still needs to resolve the problem of his king. But if 20...0-0?! then 21  \( \text{h5} \) followed by  \( \text{h2} \) and  \( \text{g4} \), or even  \( \text{xh6} \) and  \( \text{d2} \), yields White a promising attack. As for the other flank, long castling is no longer available. Timman comes up with a creative solution.

20...\( \text{d8!} \)

Intending ...\( \text{c7-b8} \) in order to secure
the king on the queenside, where it will feel much safer than on g8.

21 \textbf{We2}

White intends a2-a4 striking at Black’s queenside, but this is easily parried.

21...\textbf{a3} 22 \textbf{xc2} \textbf{b4!} 23 \textbf{xc8+ \textbf{xc8}}

The king gets one step closer to its destiny.

24 \textbf{c1}

If 24 \textbf{b1} \textbf{c6} 25 \textbf{c1} \textbf{e7} Black is fine.

24...\textbf{xd3}

Timman’s suggestion. Instead, the game continued 24...\textbf{xc1?!} 25 \textbf{xc1+} \textbf{b8} 26 \textbf{h5!} with an edge for White, now that 26...g6 runs into 27 \textbf{f6}.

25 \textbf{xd3} \textbf{e7!}

Keeping the valuable dark-squared bishop and preparing ...\textbf{b8} followed by ...\textbf{c8}, when the king would be completely safe. Now after 26 \textbf{h5} g6 the knight can no longer enter at f6, so Black has a comfortable game.

A king march can also be effected by a castled king, as in the next example.

\textit{Example 67}

Y.Zherebukh-A.R.S.Salem

Moscow 2009

23 \textbf{d2}

The king is already quite safe, and White’s positional triumphs on the queenside make his position preferable in the long run.

23...\textbf{h4} 24 \textbf{g1} \textbf{g6} 25 \textbf{c2} \textbf{f6} 26 \textbf{a4!}

By means of the threat 27 \textbf{xb6} White transfers his knight to the more active d3-square, where it will enable a positional sacrifice on e5.

26...\textbf{b8} 27 \textbf{ab2} \textbf{c7} 28 \textbf{d3} \textbf{e8} 29 \textbf{c1} \textbf{g7} 30 \textbf{c3} \textbf{f6} 31 \textbf{b3!}

Removing the king from the second rank, just in case.

31...\textbf{h8} 32 \textbf{e1}

At this point, the line 32 \textbf{cxe5!} dxe5 33
\( \odot x e 5 \) was already decisive – Baburin. Indeed, on the next move, the f4-pawn falls as well.

32...g3 33 hxg3 hxg3

34 \( \odot x e 5 ! \)

A strong blow that turns Black’s position into ruins.

34...\( \odot x g 2 \) was relatively better, although after 35 \( \odot x g 2 \) \( \odot x g 2 \) 36 \( \odot d 3 \) \( w g 5 \) 37 \( \odot a 7 \) Black has a hard time anyway.

35 \( \odot x e 5 \) \( \odot g 6 \)

Or 35...\( \odot a 8 \) 36 \( w c 3 \) \( \odot e 7 \) 37 \( \odot b 6 \) and wins. Also in the game White has a crushing advantage.

36 \( \odot x b 8 \) \( \odot x e 4 \) 37 \( \odot x a 7 \) \( \odot c 5 + \) 38 \( \odot a 2 \) \( w d 4 \)

39 \( w a 1 \) \( \odot g 7 \) 40 \( w x d 4 \) \( \odot x d 4 \) 41 \( \odot d 1 \)

Black resigned.

Beginners are advised to constantly protect their king, and activate it only when the endgame is reached. This is quite a valid recommendation, and in the later section on prophylaxis we will take a closer look at different techniques of protecting the king. However, there are in fact middlegame situations when the best or only defence consists in active movements with the monarch. Here is one example of such a “brave king”.

As often occurs in the Open Sicilian White is ahead in development, but Black has a better pawn structure in the long run. Thus White should act quickly before the opponent manages to consolidate.

19 \( w x f 7 ! ? \)

A tempting sacrifice, considering that the black king is now forced to leave the back ranks. Nevertheless, 19 \( w e 4 ! \) \( \odot c 8 \) 20 \( \odot e 7 \) \( w x e 7 \) 21 \( c 3 ! \) was objectively better, opening a second front on the queenside – Berg. Here 21...\( b x c 3 ? ! \) fails to 22 \( w a 4 + ! \) \( w f 8 \) 23 \( w x a 6 \) with a strong initiative. Black’s situation is even worse after 19...0-0? 20 \( \odot h 3 ! \) h6 21 \( \odot x h 6 \) with a winning attack.

19...\( \odot x f 7 \) 20 \( w f 3 + \) \( \odot g 6 ! \)

The king should advance! Backward movements failed to 21 \( w x a 8 + \), while 20...\( \odot f 6 ? \) 21 \( \odot x f 6 ! \) yields White a crushing attack; e.g. 21...\( g x f 6 \) 22 \( w x f 6 + \) \( w g 8 \) 23 \( \odot d 3 \), heading for g3.

21 \( w e 4 + \) \( \odot x g 5 ! \)

In the same spirit of the previous move. In contrast, after 21...\( w f 7 \) 22 \( \odot f 1 + \) \( \odot f 6 \) 23
White again obtains a decisive attack; e.g. 23...fxe6 24 fxg6+ hxh7 25 wb4+ f6 26 xg8+ or 25...hxh8 26 xe6+.

22 ad3 af8!

Creating the counter-threat of 23...hf1 mate, as well as the defensive resource ...hf4. The cautious 22.g7, preparing ...h6-g7, would have failed to 23 xe3+ h5 24 g4+ f4 (or 24...xg4 25 ad4+ h5 26 wh3+ with a quick mate) 25 wh6+ xg4 26 ad4+ f3 27 wf4+ e2 28 de2+ e1 29 lf2 mate — Berg.

23 lg3+ h6 24 ah3+ gh5 25 lg3+

The winning try 25 lh4+? af5 26 fh3+ fails to 26...g6! 27 wg4+ gh5 28 xe6+ h5! 29 lh3+ lh4 30 g4+ gh5 and the checks are over.

25...h6 26 lh3+ gh5 27 lg3+

Draw.

The “brave king” idea can also be used for parrying counterattacks when attacking. We already saw this in the final part of Hellsten-Rojas, and here is another example.

White has won the exchange, but his king is rather unprotected and Black enjoys an active queen. At this point 33...xa2?? obviously fails to 34 xg7+ with mate, but by 33...xf4! Black would keep the balance; e.g. 34 e6 w4+ 32 rh2 we5+ 36 rh1 rh5 37 lg2 g6!, when his king is probably the safer one. However, in time trouble I couldn’t resist a direct attack on the white king.

33...d5+? 34 g3!

Of course. Black is denied taking the f4-pawn.

34 we1+ 35 af2 wg1+ 36 rh4

It transpires that the white king is completely safe here.

36...h6 37 xh3!

The most technical choice, looking for a queen exchange.

37...w6+1!

Also after 37...g5+ 38 hxh5 xf3+ 39 gh6 or 38...xf7+ 39 xg7! White wins.

38 wf2 g5+ 39 lh5 wh1 40 lg6! xc8 41 wc5!

Suddenly White’s king is instrumental in setting up a mate.

41...xc6+ 42 e6 1-0

For the related exercises, see page 312.

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Example 69
M. Ulibin-J. Hellsten
Dresden 1994
The bishop pair
The bishop pair is usually a great strategi-
cal asset at any stage. We already saw some
proof of this in a number of previous ex-
amples, such as Gufeld-Kolarov, Kramnik-
Gelfand and Vokac-Navara. Here is one
more example that shows the strength of
the bishop pair.

Example 70
A.Miles-J.Sunye Neto
Linares, Nuevo León 1994

Seizing the d-file and preparing a future
\texttt{Qd6} to fight against the blocker on b5.
28...\texttt{Ah7} 29 \texttt{Ed1} \texttt{Ec7} 30 \texttt{Wb2}

By threatening 31 \texttt{Af4} White aims to
provoke ...e6-e5, though the immediate 30
\texttt{Qd6}?! looked just as strong.
30...\texttt{e5} 31 \texttt{Wd2}!

Resuming the \texttt{Qd6} idea.
31...\texttt{We6} 32 \texttt{Qd6} \texttt{Qd4}

Or 32...\texttt{Qxd6} 33 \texttt{Wxd6} \texttt{Wxd6} 34 \texttt{Qxd6}
and the a6-pawn is doomed.
33 \texttt{Qxd4} \texttt{Wxd6} 34 \texttt{Qe3}! \texttt{Wxd2} 35 \texttt{Qxd2}

The exchanges have left Black’s a6-pawn
more vulnerable.
35...\texttt{Ab7} 36 \texttt{Qd6} \texttt{Qb8} 37 \texttt{Qa7}!

A clever intermediate move. 37 \texttt{Qb6} at
once permits 37...\texttt{Ac6}, swapping White’s
active rook.
37...\texttt{Cc6} 38 \texttt{Ab6} \texttt{Ad7}

39 \texttt{Qc4}!

Thanks to ...e6-e5, both bishops are now
noticeably active and start to cooperate.
39...\texttt{f6}

Black is also suffering after 39...\texttt{Qxb4} 40
\texttt{Qd8}! \texttt{Ee8} 41 \texttt{Qxf7} \texttt{Exf8} 42 \texttt{Qg6+.} The e5-
pawn is a long-term problem.
40 \texttt{Qe6}!

Much stronger than 40 \texttt{Qd5}?! \texttt{Qxb4} 41
\texttt{Qd8} \texttt{Qxd5}! 42 \texttt{Qxe7} \texttt{Qxe7} 43 \texttt{Qd7} \texttt{Qe4!}
with chances for a draw – Miles.
40...\text{\textipa{cxb4}} 41 \text{\textipa{c5!}} a5 42 \text{\textipa{f5+}} g6 43 \text{\textipa{xf6}}
White has not only recovered the pawn, but also managed to damage Black's pawn structure.

43...\text{\textipa{g7}} 44 \text{\textipa{e6}} \text{\textipa{d3}} 45 \text{\textipa{d6!}}
Not 45 \text{\textipa{f8?!}} \text{\textipa{c7}} with unnecessary counterplay. In the game the black rook finds itself severely restricted by the bishop pair, and the e5-pawn is practically doomed.

45...\text{\textipa{f4}} 46 \text{\textipa{c4}} g5?
A bad mistake, but 46...\text{\textipa{d7}} 47 \text{\textipa{xe5}} was equally hopeless.

47 \text{\textipa{f8!}} 1-0
In view of 47...\text{\textipa{c7}} 48 \text{\textipa{hxh6 mate}}.

Since the bishops are particularly favoured by positions with an open centre, one key idea is to clear diagonals for them. Let's see one example.

\textbf{Example 71}
J.Hellsten-I.Zaja
Menton 2003

White has emerged from the opening with a slight plus thanks to his bishop pair. He now prepares e3-e4 to clear the position for his bishops, in particular the a1-h8 di-

\textbf{19 e4!}

Now that Black's previous move left his queen undefended, White carries on with his plan without bothering about ...\text{\textipa{g6-f4}}. Less promising seems 19 \text{\textipa{xg6 fxg6}} 20 e4 \text{\textipa{g4?!}} 21 f3 \text{\textipa{h6}} after which Black manages to maintain a closed position.

\textbf{19...e5}

Indeed, after 19...\text{\textipa{f4?!}} 20 \text{\textipa{g3}} followed by 21 \text{\textipa{b1}}, Black achieves nothing, and 19...\text{\textipa{dx e4?!}} 20 \text{\textipa{xe4}} \text{\textipa{xe4}} 21 \text{\textipa{xe4}} is equally uninspiring for him. By 19...e5 Zaja creates some activity but also helps me in activating the bishop on b2.

\textbf{20 \text{\textipa{g3!}}}

Keeping the tension makes sense here, since Black has difficulties in finding a useful move. Weaker was 20 \text{\textipa{dx e5?!}} \text{\textipa{xe5}}, when the queen eyes both e1 and b2.

\textbf{20...\text{\textipa{dx e4}}}

On the natural 20...\text{\textipa{ad8}} I had planned 21 \text{\textipa{exd5 exd4}} 22 \text{\textipa{xd6}}, transposing to a favourable endgame; e.g. 22...\text{\textipa{xe1+}} 23 \text{\textipa{xe1}} \text{\textipa{xd6}} 24 \text{\textipa{e4}} \text{\textipa{xe4}} 25 \text{\textipa{xe4}} \text{\textipa{cx d5}} 26...
\( \text{xd4 preparing } \text{e2-f3.} \)

21. \text{xc4 b5 22 f1}

Not 22 \text{wg6?! bxc4 with complications.}

22...\text{we6 23 d5!}

White swaps a few pawns in order to clear diagonals for his bishops. My original plan was 23 dxe5 intending 23...\text{xe5?! 24 d5,} but after 23...\text{g4!} the position seemed less clear to me.

23...\text{xd5 24 exd5 \text{xd5 25 xb5 \text{xc3 26 xc3 ed8?}}}

This leads to problems with the e5-pawn. After the correct 26...\text{c6 27 c4 wf6} Black had more chances of survival. 27 \text{c4!}

\[
\text{Diagram}
\]

- \text{xe5 offered much more; e.g. 30...f6 31 xd5! xd5 32 xf6 recovering the material with interest, or 30...g6 31 b5! (I saw only 31 xd5? xd5 32 xd5 xd5 33 wf6 f8 and Black defends) 31...c6 32 xd7 xd7 (or 32...xd7 33 wf6) 33 xd7 xd7 34 wf6 f8 35 h8+ followed by 36 xa8. In these lines the cooperation between the two bishops in the attack is striking.}

29...\text{xd5 30 wh5 xc8 31 wf3 e4?}

Returning the favour. 31...\text{h4?! 32 we4}

was equally bad, but 31...\text{xc4! 32 bxc4 c5 33 h5 f8} let the game continue.

32 \text{xe4 d1+ 33 h2}

With all his pieces directed at the black king, White obviously avoids exchanges.

33...\text{d6+ 34 g3 h8?}

A tactical slip in a hopeless position.

35 \text{g4!}

Black resigned.

It has been said that a virtue of the bishop pair is that one of the bishops can be exchanged for another advantage. Let's look at an example on this topic.

\text{Example 72}

E.Bareev-S.Lputian

Kharkov 1985

\[
\text{Diagram}
\]

- Directing both bishops at Black's king. Now any queen move like 27...\text{f6 just}

drops a pawn after 28 \text{xd8+ xd8 29 xe5,} so Black is forced to enter complications.

27...\text{d5 28 g5}

Even stronger was 28 \text{a5! d7 29 xd5! xd5 30 f3, establishing a dangerous pin. Now both 30...f4 31 d2! and 30...e7 31 b4! win on the spot; so 30...e4 31 xe4 d1+ 32 h2 d6+ 33 g3 is practically forced, when Black faces a difficult defensive task.

28...\text{d7 29 xd5?}

This wins a pawn, but 29 xe5! xe5 30
White is better thanks to the bishop pair and the weak d5-pawn. Bareev finds a simple way of increasing his advantage.

26 \( \text{B}x\text{b}3! \text{Q}x\text{c}5 27 \text{B}x\text{c}5 \text{Q}x\text{c}5 28 \text{B}b7! \)

The bishop pair is gone, but White has achieved a few other advantages in exchange: control of the seventh rank and a superior bishop.

28...\( \text{W}a5?! \)

Now White manages to trade queens, which will leave the a7-pawn more exposed. After 28...\( \text{E}c8 29 \text{W}b4 \text{W}a6! 30 \text{W}b3 \text{W}a5 \) Black had more chances of survival than in the game.

29 \( \text{W}b4! \text{E}c8 30 \text{W}x\text{a}5 \text{A}x\text{a}5 31 \text{E}e3! \)

With the strong threat of 32 \( \text{E}e7. \)

31...\( \text{E}e8 32 \text{Cc}3! \)

Bareev insists upon doubling rooks on the seventh rank. After 32 \( \text{E}x\text{e}8+ \text{E}x\text{e}8 33 \text{E}b8 \text{f}7 34 \text{E}h5+ \text{g}6 35 \text{E}x\text{g}6+ \text{E}x\text{g}6 36 \text{E}x\text{e}8 \text{A}xa3 \) White should win the rook ending, but the game continuation is more appealing.

32...\( \text{g}6 \)

In view of the threat 33 \( \text{E}c7 \text{f}8 34 \text{E}h5!, \) Black defends the h5-pawn in advance.

33 \( \text{E}c7 \text{f}8 34 \text{e}3! \)

White isn’t interested in the a7-pawn, since he is close to achieving a decisive zugzwang. The a3-pawn is untouched due to 35 \( \text{E}x\text{d}5! \).

34...\( \text{a}6 35 \text{Cc}7 \text{f}5 \)

Or 35...\( \text{Cc}5 36 \text{d}a7 \text{a}5 37 \text{a}4! \) with similar consequences.

36 \( \text{Cc}7 \text{b}5 37 \text{E}g2 \text{a}5 38 \text{a}4! \)

Zugzwang. Black has only a few desperate moves left.

38...\( \text{d}4 39 \text{exd}4 \text{f}4 40 \text{gxf}4 \text{E}f5 41 \text{E}g3 1-0 \)

In view of 41...\( \text{a}5 42 \text{E}e4 \text{E}f6 43 \text{E}d5, \) transposing to an easily won pawn ending.

Sometimes we can even consider giving up material in order to obtain the bishop pair. A typical transaction in this sense is a rook for a minor piece and a pawn, i.e. a positional exchange sacrifice. Here is one example.

**Example 73**

_E. Mortensen-S. Kudrin_

_Copenhagen 1983_

![Diagram](image-url)

White is planning a kingside attack with moves like \( \text{E}f2-h4 \) followed by \( \text{e}4-\text{e}5 \) or \( \text{f}4-\text{f}5, \) but Black’s next move changes the picture completely.

13...\( \text{E}x\text{c}3! \)
in the game.

22...\textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{d5}}} 23 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{d2}}} e4 24 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wb3}}} e3 25 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{c3}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xc3}}} 26 bxc3 b5!

Intending ...d5-c4.

27 c4 bxc4 28 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xc4}}} e4

White managed to stop Black's plan, but the bishop has now found another stronghold.

29 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wb3}}} d5 30 c3

With hindsight, eliminating the dangerous passed pawn by 30 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xe3}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xe3}}} 31 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{f2}}} seems like a better choice.

30...\textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{d3}}} 31 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{d4}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wb8}}} 32 g3 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{c4}}} 33 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wd1}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xe4}}} 34 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wf3}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}}!

In exchange for the bishop pair, Black is able to grab a few pawns.

35 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{cx}}\textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{d4}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wb4}}} 36 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{b1}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wd2+}}} 37 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wh1}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{wd4}}} 38 f5 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xe8}}} 39 \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xb7}}} \textcolor{black}{\textit{\textbf{xe4}}}!

Simplest. Black soon converted his material and positional advantages into victory.

In some closed and semi-open structures the strength of the bishop pair is not noticeably felt. This often happens when defects in the pawn formation have left the enemy knights with protected squares, as in Sasikiran-Iljushin (p. 23) and Hellsten-Olesen (p. 24). Let's see yet another example on this topic.
Example 74
J.Hellsten-J.Berrocal Farina
Santa Cruz 2005

In a typical King's Indian battle Black has just played the apparently natural 15...d7-c5?! This gives White the chance of transposing to a structure where his knights will outshine the black bishops.

16...xc5!

Damaging Black's pawn structure and creating a blocking square on c4 for the knights. Even so, in such positions White usually protects this bishop from exchanges, and I probably wouldn't have played this without prior knowledge of the old game T.V.Petrosian-S.Schweber, Stockholm Interzonal 1962, where White proceeded in a similar way.

16...xc5 17 b5!

Before installing the knight on c4 it makes sense to activate the bishop and prevent Black's tempting plan of ...e8-d6.

17...h5!

Preparing ...h6 to improve the dark-squared bishop.

18 c4xe8 19 xe8!

Yet another strong bishop vs. knight exchange, this one also "copied" from Petro-

sian's game. It is important for White to stop 20...d6 challenging his own knight on c4.

19...xe8 20 c1

The other knight heads for d3 or b3 in order to attack Black's weak pawns.

20...h6 21 e1

Directed against the plan of ...a6 followed by ...xc4 and ...e3-d4.

21...a6 22 wc2 wh4?!

Preparing ...f4 with kingside threats, but White easily prevents this idea. More sensible was 22...xc4 23 xc4 d2! 24 de2 wg5! followed by ...e3-d4, when at least Black has no "bad" pieces anymore. In the game this bishop remains a problem.

23 d3 ec8

24 ad1

Keeping things simple. After 24...xc5? c4 or 24...dxe5?! f4 25 g3 wg5! 26 d3 xg3 the game gets unnecessarily complicated, as it does after 24...b6?! c4! 25 f2 we7 followed by ...wc5. However, Rybka found an even better option: 24 g3! wf6 (or 24...wh3 25 b6 and 25...c4? no longer works due to 26 f2!) 25 dxe5 xc4 26 xc4 xf3 27 we2! with a tremendous positional plus for White.

24...ab8 25 b3 xc4

Black gives up the bishop pair, aware by
now that the threats towards e5 and a5 were for real; e.g. 25...f6 26 \(\text{\texttt{\textsc{d}}}x\texttt{a}5 \texttt{\textsc{d}}xd3 27 \texttt{\textsc{w}}xd3 f4 28 g3 \texttt{\textsc{h}}xg3 29 \texttt{\textsc{e}}2! f4 30 \texttt{\textsc{c}}6 \texttt{\textsc{b}}7 31 d6 and White wins.

26 \texttt{\textsc{w}}xc4 \texttt{\textsc{b}}6 27 \texttt{\textsc{e}}2!

Some prophylaxis to protect the king from a potential \(\texttt{\textsc{h}}6-f4.

27...\texttt{\textsc{f}}6 28 \texttt{\textsc{d}}b2!

The knight is redirected to the blocking square on c4, where it will support a future d5-d6.

28...\texttt{\textsc{h}}4?!

This lets the d-pawn roll. 28...f8 29 \texttt{\textsc{w}}d3 \texttt{\textsc{d}}6 30 \texttt{\textsc{c}}4 \texttt{\textsc{a}}6 was more tenacious, although 31 \texttt{\textsc{c}}2 followed by 32 \texttt{\textsc{d}}c1 still yields White a pleasant edge.

29 \texttt{\textsc{d}}3 \texttt{\textsc{f}}4 30 \texttt{\textsc{c}}4 \texttt{\textsc{a}}6 31 d6! \texttt{\textsc{g}}7 32 \texttt{\textsc{w}}d5!

The most technical choice which improves the queen and creates the threat of 33 d7 \texttt{\textsc{d}}d8 34 \texttt{\textsc{w}}xc5. In the game I messed things up by 32 d7?! \texttt{\textsc{d}}d8 33 \texttt{\textsc{d}}d6 \texttt{\textsc{a}}a8 34 \texttt{\textsc{w}}b5? (a simple win was achieved by 34 \texttt{\textsc{b}}7! c4 35 \texttt{\textsc{w}}xc4 \texttt{\textsc{w}}b6+ 36 \texttt{\textsc{c}}5 followed by 37 \texttt{\textsc{b}}5) 34...\texttt{\textsc{e}}6 35 \texttt{\textsc{d}}d5, when 35...\texttt{\textsc{e}}x7! 36 \texttt{\textsc{f}}5+ \texttt{\textsc{g}}5 37 \texttt{\textsc{w}}xd7 \texttt{\textsc{w}}xd7 38 \texttt{\textsc{c}}d7 c4! 39 \texttt{\textsc{b}}c4 \texttt{\textsc{c}}8 would have yielded Black reasonable drawing chances.

32...\texttt{\textsc{a}}7

Now 33 d7? \texttt{\textsc{d}}d8 leaves the d-pawn exposed, as in the game. However, White has a much simpler option at his disposal.

33 \texttt{\textsc{b}}6! \texttt{\textsc{d}}d8 34 \texttt{\textsc{w}}xc5

On top of his strategical advantages White enjoys an extra pawn.

In fact there are many openings where one side deliberately gives up the bishop pair for different reasons. In the Spanish Exchange Variation and the Sicilian Rossolimo, the \(\texttt{\textsc{x}}xc6 capture is a main feature, while \texttt{\textsc{xf}}6 is often seen in the Ragozin Variation of the Queen’s Gambit, as well as the French Rubinstein Variation, to name a few. Black, for his part, has entire defences based on the \(\texttt{\textsc{x}}xc3 capture, such as the Nimzo-Indian and the French Winawer. And in many lines of the Benoni and the Slav, he is happy to give up his light-squared bishop by \(\texttt{\textsc{x}}xf3.

In positions where the owner of the bishop pair doesn’t suffer from any weak squares or pawns, a main idea for his opponent is to “mess up” the game, creating threats with every move, that could eventually lead to a transformation of the position, protected squares for his knights, etc. John Watson investigated this subject quite thoroughly in his fascinating work Secrets of Modern Chess Strategy, and it is a central theme in Chigorin’s Defence, as well as in a few other openings. Here is one example.

Example 75
L.Schandorff-J.Hellsten
German League 1999

![Chess Board](image)

White has emerged from Réti’s Opening with the bishop pair, without having made any obvious concessions. Thus Black needs to act energetically in order to avoid long-term inferiority.
13...b4!
Indirectly attacking the e4-pawn.
14 wc2
After 14 xe1?! dc5 15 wc2 wd3! Black obtains excellent counterplay.
14...xc3
The later game A.Kochyev-D.Kovaljov, St. Petersburg 1999, continued instead 14...dc5 15 xd1 we7 16 f3 da5 17 xe2 db6 18 bh2 h5! with counterplay, now that 19 h4 runs into 19...xcxe4? 20 fxe4 dg4+ 21 rh1 df2+ 22 rh2 dg4+ with a perpetual. However, 18 bh1 might be a better try. In the game Black captures on c3 immediately in order to secure a protected square for his knight on c5.
15 bxc3 dc5

16 xd1
If 16 gg5?!, intending 17 xd1, then 16...wd3! 17 wxd3 xd3 18 fd1 dc5 seems quite playable, since 19 xf6 gxf6 at any moment doesn’t really do any harm to Black.
16...wa5 17 xd4! xd8 18 dd2
White has managed to defend the e4-pawn in a clever way and now prepares 19 xe1, stabilizing his position. Then he could consider e4-e5 or f2-f4, advancing his pawn majority.
18 de6!

Fighting against the strong rook on d4. Pawn grabbing with 18...xcxe4? failed to a back rank mate.
19 xd8
On 19 b4 I had planned 19...wh5?! 20 xe1 (or 20 xb7 dc5 with activity) 20...dc5 21 d4 wg6!, hitting the e4-pawn from a different angle.
19...xd8 20 xe3
Preparing f2-f4. The immediate 20 f4? fails to 20...wc5+ 21 h2 wf2 etc.

20...h5!
Black finds new ways of “messing up” the game. Now his plan is 21...h4 22 g4 we5 followed by ...df4, exploiting the newly created protected square. If White prevents this by 21 h4, then 21...dg4 with new threats.
21 f4 h4 22 g4 dc5!
Installing the threat of 23 xd3. White can’t avoid this by 24 h2 d3 25 xc5? due to 25...xc3 followed by ...xc5.
23 xd4
Both 23 g5?! dh5 24 wf2 xd3! 25 xh4 xc3 26 f1 g6 and 23 e5?! dd5 24 xd2 de6! 25 f1 wc5+ 26 dh1 de3 leave White under some pressure. With the game continuation he avoids such counterplay, but also leaves the f4-pawn undefended, something that Black immediately exploits.
Mastering Chess Strategy

23...\(\text{e6!} \enspace 24. \text{e3}\)

Or 24 \(\text{xf6?!} \enspace \text{gxf6}\) and White’s dark square weaknesses are a much more relevant factor than the doubled f-pawns.

24...\(\text{c5}\)

Other moves give White time to consolidate by 25 \(\text{f1}.\) Hence a repetition of moves is logical.

25 \(\text{d4} \enspace \text{e6} \enspace 26. \text{e3} \enspace \text{c5}\)

Draw.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 315.
Chapter Three

Exchanges

The exchange of pieces is an important idea at any stage of the game, one that can have a huge impact on the strategical balance. The following examples have been categorized according to the principal objective being supported by the exchange. However, it should be noted that sometimes one single exchange can support several objectives.

Realizing a material advantage
One of the first strategical principles taught to new chess players is that when you have more material, exchange pieces! Thus we are able to reduce the opponent's counterplay and simplify to an endgame, where the material advantage can be more easily realized. Let's see a few examples.

Example 76
Z.Efimenko-R.Vaganian
German League 2005

In this late middlegame position White is two pawns up but his king is rather exposed on a1. Efimenko finds a technical solution.

\[ \text{34 } \text{wd4!} \]

Forcing a queen exchange that will finish off Black's counterplay and produce a superior endgame. When carrying out such exchanges, we should be ready to return some of the extra material if needed, like the f7-pawn in this case. In contrast, the greedy 34 \text{dxb3?} failed to 34...\text{wc3+} 35 \text{b1} \text{xb3+!} 36 axb3 \text{wb3+} with a perpetual.

\[ \text{34...wd4+} \]

After 34...\text{we7} 35 \text{b3} Black's counter-
play is gone, while 34...\textit{Wxc4?} fails to 35 \textit{Wd6+ \textit{Kf7} 36 \textit{Wxb8 \textit{Wc3+} 37 \textit{Wb2 etc.}}

\textbf{35 \textit{Wxd4 \textit{Wxc4} 36 \textit{Wxc4 \textit{Wxf7} 37 a4!}}}

Passed pawns should move forward! In the game, afflicted by heavy time trouble, Efimenko preferred 37 \textit{Ze4?!}, when Black could have put up some resistance by 37...\textit{Ed8!} 38 \textit{Ze2 \textit{Ha8!}}, hindering the advance of the a-pawn – Meyer/Efimenko.

\textbf{37...\textit{Ee6 38 \textit{Ha2}}}

White wins by bringing up his king; e.g. 38...\textit{Eb7} 39 \textit{Ba3 \textit{Cd5} 40 \textit{Cc2 \textit{Ba7} 41 \textit{Bb4 \textit{Eb7+} 42 \textit{Cc3} (42 \textit{Ba5 is also possible) 42...\textit{Cc7+} 43 \textit{Cd3 \textit{Ba7} (after 43...\textit{Bxc2 44 \textit{Bxc2 \textit{Ba4} 45 a5 the white king is first to reach the kingside) 44 \textit{Ba2 \textit{Bc5 45 Ha1! with a position reminiscent of the famous game A.Alekhine-J.R.Capablanca, World Championship (game 34), Buenos Aires 1927.}}}

\textbf{Example 77}

\textbf{R.Djurhuus-J.Hellsten}

Asker 1997

White is two pawns down but is close to recovering one of them and enjoys a fair amount of activity for the other one. His next moves might be \textit{Exa3, Ha2} and \textit{Bb5} with some initiative.

\textbf{13...\textit{Wb6!}}

Looking for a queen exchange to reduce White’s initiative and lead the game into an endgame with an extra pawn.

\textbf{14 \textit{Wc2}}

After 14 \textit{Wd1? \textit{Wb2} 15 \textit{Bbd2 \textit{Wxc3 the white queenside collapses, while 14 \textit{Ba5 can be met by 14...\textit{Bd7 15 \textit{Bxa3 a6! 16 \textit{Wa4 \textit{Cc8 and White is in trouble.}}}}}}}

\textbf{14...\textit{Wb2!}}

In the same spirit of the previous move. Now the queen exchange is inevitable.

\textbf{15 \textit{Wxb2 axb2} 16 \textit{Ha2 \textit{Bd7} 17 \textit{Bxb2 0-0-0} 18 \textit{Bbd2 \textit{Edg8!}}}}

As often happens, a material advantage is transformed into a positional one, or vice versa. In this case, Black returns the second pawn in order to swap the opponent’s most active piece.

\textbf{19 \textit{Bxg8+ \textit{Bxg8} 20 \textit{Bxh7 \textit{Ff8} 21 \textit{Fg1}}}}

It is not easy to find any prospects for White’s minor pieces.

\textbf{21...b5! 22 \textit{Ba2}}

Or 22 \textit{Bxb5 \textit{Bxd4} 23 \textit{Bb1 \textit{Cc6 and the e5-pawn is in trouble.}}}

\textbf{22...b4}

Hitting the base of the pawn chain. Thanks to the bishop pair, the passed a-pawn and White’s weaknesses, Black is clearly better.
Example 78
E.Sveshnikov-D.King
Bern 1992

18 \texttt{Wxe2} \texttt{Zfd8} 19 d4 \texttt{Zac8}

Or 19...e5 20 \texttt{dxe5} \texttt{Qxe5} 21 \texttt{Qxe5} \texttt{Axe5}
22 \texttt{Afe1} with a sound extra pawn.
20 \texttt{Afe1} e6 21 \texttt{We4}!

Sveshnikov continues with his simplification policy.
21...\texttt{Wxe4}?!

Being a pawn down, queen exchanges should be rejected unless there is a good reason. Black could count on more practical chances after 21...\texttt{Wa5}, when White still has a slight problem with the bishop on a3.

22 \texttt{Zxe4} \texttt{Zd7}

Black covers the e7-square, aware that after 22...\texttt{Qa5} 23 \texttt{Ze7}! \texttt{Zd7} 24 \texttt{Qg5} \texttt{Qc4} 25 \texttt{Ze2} White may soon start to advance his queenside majority, with moves such as \texttt{Zd1}, \texttt{Zc1}, b2-b3, \texttt{Zb2} and c3-c4.

23 b3?!

Avoiding the ...\texttt{Qa5-c4} plan and enabling \texttt{Za3-b2}. In contrast, the game continued 23 \texttt{Zae1} \texttt{Qa5} 24 \texttt{Qd2} \texttt{Zd5} (24...e5?! is also interesting) and White's queenside was somewhat paralysed, although Sveshnikov won in the end.

23...e5

A temporary pawn sacrifice to create some counterplay. Besides, the exchange of pawns tends to favour the defending side.

24 dxe5
Another good option is 24  \( \text{cex5} \)  \( \text{cex5} \)
25 dxe5  \( \text{dxc3} \)  26  \( \text{dxc6} \)  \( \text{a2} \)  27  \( \text{dxc4} \), parrying the threat of 27...\( \text{xd6} \) while preparing 2a4 and b4-b5.

24...\( \text{dxc3} \)  25  \( \text{g2} \)  \( \text{dxc3} \)  26  \( \text{ae1} \)

Preparing to answer 26...\( \text{c2} \) by 27  \( \text{e1e2} \). With \( \text{a3-d6} \) coming up, White enjoys a sound extra pawn in the endgame.

For the related exercises, see page 316.

**Realizing a positional advantage**

The previous examples showed how the realization of a material advantage was facilitated by exchanges. This also applies to positional advantages, such as the bishop pair (compare Miles-Sunye Neto, p. 86), weak points in the enemy pawn structure, a mobile pawn majority, etc. Let’s see a few examples.

**Example 79**

A.Kharlov-A.Villavicencio Martinez
Linares 1997

\[ \begin{array}{c}
15  \text{g2}!

Preparing more exchanges.

15...\( \text{ad8} \) 16  \( \text{d4} \)  \( \text{xd4} \)?

16...\( \text{g6} \) was correct, keeping more pieces on the board, when 17  \( \text{d2} \) followed by  \( \text{d1} \) or  \( \text{e1} \) leads to a slight white advantage.

17  \( \text{xd4} \)  \( \text{xe2} \) 18  \( \text{xe2} \)  \( \text{c6} \) 19  \( \text{d1} \)!

The last piece is brought into play with focus on the d5-pawn. In contrast, the further exchange by 19  \( \text{xc6} \)? permits 19...\( \text{bxc6} \), when the d5-pawn is no longer a problem and might even turn into a passed pawn after ...c6-c5 and ...d5-d4.

19...\( \text{xd4} \)?!

Maintaining the tension with 19...\( \text{d7} \)
seems better. If now 20 \( \text{Hd3} \), then 20...\( \text{fe8} \) preparing \( \text{g5} \)-\( \text{c4} \) with some activity.

20 \( \text{Hxd4} \) \( \text{wc6} \) 21 \( \text{wd2!} \)

Evidently, the absence of minor pieces on the board has made it easier for White to increase the pressure on the d5-pawn.

21\( \text{Hd6} \) 22 \( \text{Hed3} \) \( \text{Hfd8} \) 23 \( \text{c4!} \)

A typical tactical resource in the fight against isolated pawns.

23...\( \text{h6} \) 24 \( \text{Hxd5} \) \( \text{exd5} \) 25 \( \text{Hxd5} \)

A pawn up, White is happy to exchange as many pieces as he can.

25...\( \text{Hxd5?} \)

25...\( \text{He8} \) 26 \( \text{Hd8} \) h5 was preferable when, contrary to the game, White still has to work for a while to create a passed pawn.

26 \( \text{cx d5} \)

The apparently logical 26 \( \text{Hxd5?} \) \( \text{Hxd5} \) 27 \( \text{cx d5} \) fails to 27...\( \text{Hf8} \) and Black's king soon eliminates the extra pawn.

26...\( \text{Hd6} \) 27 \( \text{Hd4!} \)

Centralization is a key idea in queen endings, in order to exploit the range of this piece fully.

27...\( \text{a6} \) 28 \( \text{Hf1} \) \( \text{Hf8} \) 29 \( \text{Hge2} \) \( \text{Hge7+} \) 30 \( \text{Hg3} \) \( \text{Hb4?} \)

In a difficult endgame Black overlooks the opponent's idea.

31 \( \text{Ha3!} \) \( \text{Hxa3} \) 32 \( \text{Hxa3} \)

Now the queen exchange is correct since the d5-pawn can be defended. The pawn ending concluded 32...\( \text{He7} \) 33 \( \text{He3} \) \( \text{Hd6} \) 34 \( \text{Hc4} \) b6 35 a4 h5 36 h4 g6 37 g3 f6 38 f4 \( \text{Hd7} \) 39 a5! \( \text{bxa5} \) 40 \( \text{Hc5} \) a4 41 a3 and Black resigned.

---

**Example 80**

**S.Brynell-K.Moberg**

Gothenburg 1996

This structure, typical of the Spanish Exchange variation, is another case where virtually any piece trade clearly favours one of the players. Black possesses the bishop pair but also suffers from a defective pawn structure, in the sense that his queenside pawn majority cannot be easily converted into a passed pawn. Thus White's next move suggests itself.

11 \( \text{Hf4!} \)

Depriving Black of the bishop pair, and taking the game one step further towards an endgame, where the pawn structure speaks in White's favour. For this reason, contemporary games in this variation usually see Black postponing or omitting ...\( \text{Hf8-d6} \).

11...\( \text{H0-0-0} \) 12 \( \text{Hd2} \) \( \text{He7} \)
Or 12...\text{xf}4 13 \text{xd}8+ \text{xd}8 14 \text{xf}4 followed by \text{d}1+ with similar consequences.

13 \text{ad}1 \text{xf}4 14 \text{xf}4 \text{f}7

15 \text{f}3

A natural move that prepares \text{f}2-e3, but 15 \text{xd}8+ \text{xd}8 16 \text{xd}8+ \text{xd}8 17 \text{f}3 was more precise – Brynell. By exchanging both pairs of rooks, White reduces the opponent’s counterplay and avoids any drawish rook endgames.

15...\text{xd}2 16 \text{xd}2 \text{ad}8?!

16...\text{e}8!, keeping the rook on the board, was preferable for reasons explained in the previous note.

17 \text{xd}8+ \text{xd}8 18 \text{f}2

Now White has a small but enduring advantage thanks to his mobile pawn majority on the kingside.

18...\text{d}7 19 \text{e}3 \text{d}6 20 \text{d}3

Clearing the way for the f-pawn.

20...\text{g}6?!

A passive diagonal for the bishop. 20...\text{b}5 was more natural, trying to make progress on the queenside. Now the tempting 21 \text{e}5+ \text{fxe}5 22 \text{e}4+ doesn’t really achieve much after 22...\text{d}5! 23 \text{dx}a\text{c}5 \text{a}5. Thus 21 \text{a}3?!, safeguarding the a-pawn, might be a better try and if 21...\text{xc}6, then White plays 22 \text{xe}2, preventing the knight jump to d4 –

25 \text{e}5+!

Using some minor tactics Brynell finally manages to break through on the kingside.

25...\text{fxe}5 26 \text{f}5 \text{e}8 27 \text{e}4+ \text{e}7

If Black hangs on to the pawn by 27...\text{d}5, then 28 \text{f}6! \text{g}6 29 \text{fg}5 \text{d}8 30 \text{dx}h7 gives White a huge edge thanks to the strong passed pawn.

28 \text{c}3!

Less technical was 28 \text{xc}5?! \text{b}4 with counterplay.

28...\text{a}5

Black has run out of active plans and from now on White just has to advance his kingside majority to achieve the passed pawn. The c5-pawn can wait.

29 \text{h}4 \text{h}5 30 \text{g}5! \text{g}6?

Leaving the opponent with a protected passed pawn can’t be right, but there was no satisfactory defence to 31 \text{f}6+ anyway.

31 \text{f}6+ \text{e}6 32 \text{a}4!

Before taking on c5, White softens up the c4-pawn.

32...\text{b}4 33 \text{xc}5+ \text{d}5 34 \text{b}7!
Tying the black knight to the defence of the a-pawn.

34...\textit{f}7 35 \textit{d}2 bxc3 36 bxc3 \textit{d}8?

Black resigned without waiting for 37 \textit{xd}8. In any case, even without this time-trouble blunder, he was lost in view of the inevitable \textit{e}4(\textit{xc}4)-d6.

Of course there are also pawn structures where the simplifications tend to favour Black. One case is the Open Sicilian, where White, in the event of an unsuccessful attack, often ends up in an inferior endgame. Here is one simple example.

\textit{Example 81}

\textit{S.Bouaziz-V.Jansa}

\textit{Sarajevo 1979}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

By means of an earlier e4-e5 advance White gained some space and took steps to a future kingside attack. However, from a long-term perspective the e5-pawn is weak, while the queenside pawn structure also favours Black, whose pawn on b5 restricts the white majority. In this context, Jansa’s subsequent play is easy to understand.

17...\textit{xf}3

Also interesting is 17...b4?!, asking the question of the knight; e.g. 18 \textit{e}4?! \textit{xe}5 or 18 \textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 19 \textit{e}4 \textit{c}4! in the same spirit as the game continuation.

18 \textit{xf}3

After 18 \textit{xf}3?! \textit{xe}5 19 \textit{g}3 f6 Black will have a clear advantage in the endgame due to the backward c-pawn.

18...\textit{c}4!

A key move, in order to transpose to a favourable endgame. Less clear is 18...b4?! 19 \textit{e}4 \textit{xe}5 20 \textit{g}3 with ideas like \textit{h}5 and \textit{g}5.

19 \textit{xc}4

Or 19 \textit{f}2?! b4 20 b3 \textit{c}5!, insisting on the queen swap; e.g. 21 \textit{e}4 \textit{xf}2 22 \textit{xf}2 \textit{d}6 followed by \textit{d}5, with a comfortable edge.

19...\textit{xc}4 20 \textit{d}1 \textit{b}6 21 \textit{e}3 \textit{c}5!

The bishop exchange will further emphasize White’s problems with the e5-pawn.

22 \textit{d}2?!

22 a3 was a lesser evil, avoiding the course of the game, when Black could consider a timely ...a6-a5 followed by ...b5-b4.

22...b4 23 \textit{d}1 \textit{xe}3 24 \textit{xe}3

After 24 \textit{xe}3? \textit{e}4 the e5-pawn falls.

24...\textit{d}5 25 \textit{ee}2 \textit{fc}8 26 g3

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

White is doomed to passivity and Jansa proceeds with the creation of a new weakness.
26...\text{\textit{d}}4c5! 27 \text{\textit{d}}g2 h5 28 \text{\textit{d}}f3 \text{\textit{a}}5

Winning a pawn.

29 \text{\textit{d}}e3 \text{\textit{d}}xe3 30 \text{\textit{d}}xe3 \text{\textit{a}}xa2 31 \text{\textit{d}}b3 a5

Black soon realized his extra pawn.

Example 82
Y. Seirawan-Alexa. Ivanov
US Championship, Salt Lake City 1999

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{example82.png}
\end{center}

17...\text{\textit{a}}6! was correct, preventing the \text{\textit{d}}d3-c5 manoeuvre. After 18 \text{\textit{d}}c5 \text{\textit{d}}xc5 19 \text{\textit{d}}xc5 \text{\textit{d}}d7 20 \text{\textit{d}}d3, preparing \text{\textit{a}}a3 and \text{\textit{a}}fa1, White has a slight edge due to the weak a4-pawn, but nothing more.

18 \text{\textit{d}}d3 fxe5 19 dxe5

With a clear grip on the queenside.

19...\text{\textit{d}}f7 20 f4 \text{\textit{c}}e7 21 h4!

Preventing the ...\text{\textit{g}}7-\text{\textit{g}}5 counter-strike. Here, or later, 21...h6 is well met by 22 h5, freezing the pawn structure.

21...\text{\textit{c}}c8 22 \text{\textit{b}}c5

Just in time, before Black goes ...\text{\textit{c}}6-c5. Now the a4-pawn has turned into a serious problem.

22...\text{\textit{d}}b6 23 \text{\textit{a}}a2 \text{\textit{b}}d7

Or 23...\text{\textit{c}}c7 24 \text{\textit{a}}fa1 \text{\textit{a}}ca7 25 b3! a3 26 c3 intending \text{\textit{b}}b4-c2.

24 \text{\textit{a}}fa1 \text{\textit{d}}xc5 25 \text{\textit{d}}xc5 \text{\textit{a}}cb8 26 b3!

The cleanest way of conquering the a4-pawn. 26 \text{\textit{d}}xa4?! \text{\textit{d}}xa4 27 \text{\textit{d}}xa4 \text{\textit{d}}xa4 28 \text{\textit{d}}xa4 \text{\textit{d}}xb2 is less clear.

26...\text{\textit{a}}xb3?

Any other move allows 27 \text{\textit{d}}xa4 with a decisive endgame plus, but now Black gets much bigger problems after 27 \text{\textit{a}}a7+! \text{\textit{a}}xa7 28 \text{\textit{a}}xa7+ \text{\textit{a}}e8 29 \text{\textit{c}}xb3. In fact, Ivanov resigned without waiting for 27 \text{\textit{a}}a7+.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 317.
Eliminating key pieces

In the previous examples we saw how virtually any exchange favoured the player with a positional advantage. More common, however, is the situation where one side is looking to trade off a specific enemy piece. The motivation can either be long-term (e.g. to leave the opponent with the “bad” bishop) or short-term (e.g. get rid of his most active piece). Here we will have a look at the first case.

Example 83
J.Piket-J.Timman
Dutch Championship, Amsterdam 1996

In some structures the pawn formation has such an impact on the range of the bishops that we can easily talk about “good” and “bad” bishops. In the position above, White uses a small tactical trick in order to exchange his “bad” bishop for the opponents “good” one, which will reduce Black’s control over the light squares.

12 \textit{h3!} \textit{xh3}

After 12...\textit{f7?!} the bishop on h3 is hardly a bad piece anymore, and it even helps White in winning a pawn by 13 \textit{g4!}

14 \textit{xd7+ xd7 15 xd7+ xd7 16 fxe5 xc4 17 exf6!} – Piket.

13 \textit{h5+ g6 14 xh3}

Thanks to the bishop swap, the white queen now controls the whole h3-c8 diagonal, with particular focus on the weak e6-square.

14...\textit{b6 15 fxe5! fxe5}

After 15...\textit{xc4?} 16 exf6 White wins a pawn, while 15...\textit{xe5?!} 16 \textit{xe5 xe5?} runs into 17 \textit{f4 h5 18 e6} with a strong initiative. In conclusion, the timely 15 fxe5 forced Black to open the f-file.

16 \textit{e6 xc4 17 xc4}

An interesting alternative was 17 \textit{f7+?! d7 18 xc4}, in order to temporarily displace Black’s king. Now if 18...\textit{d6 19 f3 e6, challenging the active white queen, then 20 d5+! keeps up the pressure.}

17...0-0-0 18 \textit{h6}

Activating the bishop and preventing 18...\textit{h(d)f8.}

18...\textit{dg8!}

By creating the threat of 19...\textit{g5} and 20...\textit{g6}, Black prevents the tempting manoeuvre \textit{f3-g5}. He also vacates d8 to the knight, from where it will cover the sensitive e6 and f7 squares.

19 \textit{f7 d8 20 g7}

White is slightly better thanks to his su-
perior bishop and light square control. The game continued 20...\textit{\textcopyright}xg7 21 \textit{\textcopyright}xg7 \textit{\textcopyright}e8 22 \textit{\textcopyright}f3 \textit{\textcopyright}d6 23 \textit{\textcopyright}h6 \textit{\textcopyright}f7 24 \textit{\textcopyright}d2 \textit{\textcopyright}xc4 25 \textit{\textcopyright}xc4 \textit{\textcopyright}d7 26 \textit{\textcopyright}f1 \textit{\textcopyright}e6 27 h4!, intending h4-h5, and Piket eventually won.

**Example 84**

V. Smyslov-A. Denker

USSR-USA match, Moscow 1946

![Chess board](image)

The principle of “good” and “bad” bishops isn’t limited to closed structures. In the position above, we can observe that Black’s light-squared bishop enjoys a great range and is useful in controlling the weak square on d5. In contrast, its colleague on g7 is restricted by its own pawns. Thus White’s next move in this position isn’t hard to predict.

24 \textit{\textcopyright}c3!

Intending 25 \textit{\textcopyright}d5 in order to exchange the opponent’s good bishop. Please note that the straightforward 24 \textit{\textcopyright}d3?, intending to double rooks, runs into 24...d5! with strong counterplay. On the other hand, 24 \textit{\textcopyright}c3?! with the same intention seems fully playable.

24...\textit{\textcopyright}e7??!

The prophylactic 24...\textit{\textcopyright}h7 can be met by 25 \textit{\textcopyright}e4!, followed by h4-h5 and \textit{\textcopyright}d3, with pressure on the g6-pawn – Yusupov-Smyslov. Even so, this must be better than the text, where Black is reduced to a typical “good knight vs. bad bishop” scenario.

25 \textit{\textcopyright}d5! \textit{\textcopyright}h7 26 \textit{\textcopyright}xe6 \textit{\textcopyright}xe6 27 \textit{\textcopyright}d3

In the absence of Black’s light-squared bishop White has an easier job attacking the weak pawn on d6. Besides, his knight can no longer be exchanged.

27...\textit{\textcopyright}c7 28 \textit{\textcopyright}cd1 \textit{\textcopyright}f7 29 \textit{\textcopyright}e4 \textit{\textcopyright}f8 30 \textit{\textcopyright}d5!

Preparing \textit{\textcopyright}f3 and \textit{\textcopyright}d2 with strong pressure on d6. Smyslov later converted his clear advantage into victory.

**Example 85**

E. Geller-E. Sveshnikov

Moscow 1995

![Chess board](image)

Now let’s see the exchange of bishops in a more defensive context. Just like in the previous example, Black is suffering slightly from a weak backward pawn on d6 and a passive dark-squared bishop. Sveshnikov finds an excellent solution.

14...\textit{\textcopyright}e8!!

Preparing ...\textit{\textcopyright}g5 in order to get rid of the “bad” bishop. 14...\textit{\textcopyright}d7?!, with the same idea, is less appropriate since the d6-pawn will be hanging, but 14...\textit{\textcopyright}h6!?, intending ...\textit{\textcopyright}h7 and ...\textit{\textcopyright}g5 was interesting as well.
15 $d5

The restrictive 15 $h5 can be met by 15...g6 16 $h6 f5! with counterplay.

15...$g5 16 $xg5

On 16 $e3 Black could try 16...$xe3 17 $xe3 $xd5! 18 $xd5 $b6 intending ...$c7-e6-d4, when it is White who will suffer from a “bad” bishop.

16...$xg5 17 b4

By this advance White clears the third rank for his rooks and prepares to meet 17...$xd5 18 $xd5 $c6 (intending ...$c7-e6) with 19 b5!. Thus in the game Black directs his attention to the kingside.

17...f5!? 18 exf5 $xf5 19 $a3 $d8 20 $g3

Preferable was 20 $c3 $f7 21 g3! $f6 22 $g2 with a slight edge – Belov/Baburin.

20...$f7 21 b3 $f6

Challenging the strong enemy knight.

22 $xf6+ $xf6 23 $d2 $c7 24 $d3 $f7 25 $e3

25 $d1 seemed more logical, but Geller may not have liked 25...$h5!? 26 f3 $b6+ 27 $h1 e4 with complications.

25...h6 26 $d2 b5!

By this dynamic blow Black finally gets rid of his backward pawn on d6.

27 cxb5 $xb5 28 $xb5 $b8 29 $d3 $xb4

With full equality. The game was soon drawn.

---

Here is a more complex example on the subject of leaving the opponent with “bad” pieces. Optically White appears to be much better thanks to his space advantage and the passive bishop on a8. However, a closer look reveals that if Black just manages to play ...c6-c5, then his bishop wakes up and his pawn structure gets in order.

19 $xd8!

By exchanging the four rooks Karpov aims to leave the black bishop undefended, so that the ...c6-c5 advance won’t work tactically. It is of less importance that Black gains temporary command of the open file.

19...$xd8 20 $d1! $xd1+

On 20...$c8 White could switch his focus to the d-file by 21 $d6! c5 22 $d3 $xf3 23 $d7! $b8 24 $xf3, when the control of the open file and the 7th rank ensures a long-term advantage.

21 $xd1 $d8 22 $f3!

Again preventing ...c6-c5. Lautier now wins a pawn, but when making his 19th move Karpov must have already estimated that his positional grip more than compen-
sates for a slight material disadvantage.

22...\text{\texttt{d2}} 23 \texttt{b3} \text{\texttt{xa2}} 24 \text{\texttt{b4}}!

With the concrete idea of \texttt{b4-b5}. The straightforward 24 \texttt{d4}?! promises less due to 24...\texttt{wa3}, e.g. 25 \texttt{d7} \texttt{a1}+! 26 \texttt{d1} \texttt{h6} or 25 \texttt{d8}+ \texttt{f8} 26 \texttt{c7} \texttt{c5}.

24...\text{\texttt{a1+}} 25 \text{\texttt{h2}} \text{\texttt{a6}}

Heading for the eighth rank. The more active 25...\texttt{wa3} permits 26 \texttt{c5}! \texttt{c3} (or 26...\texttt{bxc5} 27 \texttt{b5}! \texttt{wa5} 28 \texttt{bxc6} \texttt{c7} 29 \texttt{d3}! with 30 \texttt{d7} next) 27 \text{\texttt{cx}}\text{\texttt{b6}} \text{\texttt{axb6}} 28 \texttt{b5}, followed by 29 \texttt{bxc6}, creating a dangerous passed pawn.

26 \texttt{d4}

After 26 \texttt{b5}?! \text{\texttt{wc8}} 27 \texttt{bxc6} \texttt{h6}, followed by 28...\texttt{a5}, Black obtains counterplay – Karpov.

26...\text{\texttt{c8}} 27 \texttt{c5}!

This advance leaves the “bad” bishop even more restricted, and transforms the \texttt{c6}-pawn into an eternal weakness.

27...\text{\texttt{bxc5}} 28 \texttt{\texttt{x}}\texttt{c5} \texttt{a6} 29 \texttt{\texttt{e7}} \texttt{g6} 30 \texttt{h4}!

A typical idea to soften up the enemy kingside or create tactical motifs by \texttt{h5}-\texttt{h6}.

30...\texttt{h5}?

A natural, but bad move that lets the white king enter on the dark squares. 30...\texttt{b8} 31 \texttt{h3} \texttt{h6}! was necessary, in order to answer 32 \texttt{h5} with 32...\texttt{g5}.

31 \texttt{g3}!

31...\texttt{b7}

Black searches for relief in a queen exchange. In any case, 31...\texttt{b8} 32 \texttt{f4}, with the plan \texttt{e4}, \texttt{f2-f3} and \texttt{g2-g4}, would force him to do so sooner or later in order to save his king. On the other hand, after 31...\texttt{c5} 32 \texttt{bxc5} \texttt{xf3} 33 \texttt{gx}\texttt{f3} the \texttt{c}-pawn is likely to decide the game; e.g. 33...\texttt{a5} 34 \texttt{d6} followed by \texttt{c5-c6} and \texttt{d7}, or 33...\texttt{c6} 34 \texttt{d8}+! \texttt{g7} 35 \texttt{b6} with 36 \texttt{c6} next.

32 \texttt{xb7}!

An excellent decision. Despite the pawn minus, Karpov has nothing against exchanges, as long as the black bishop stays on the board. From now on the passive state of this piece leaves Black helpless against White’s plan of creating a passed pawn on the h-file.

32...\texttt{xb7} 33 \texttt{f4} \texttt{f8} 34 \texttt{g5} \texttt{e7} 35 \texttt{e4}! \texttt{a8}

Or 35...\texttt{c8} 36 \texttt{xc6} \texttt{d7} 37 \texttt{xd7}! \texttt{xd7} 38 \texttt{f6}! \texttt{e8} 39 \texttt{f3}, followed by 40 \texttt{g4} with an easy win.

36 \texttt{f3} \texttt{b7}

White also wins after 36...\texttt{c5} 37 \texttt{xa8} \texttt{cxb4} 38 \texttt{c6} \texttt{b3} 39 \texttt{a4} \texttt{b2} 40 \texttt{c2} – Karpov.

37 \texttt{g4} \texttt{a8}

37...\texttt{hxg4} 38 \texttt{fxg4} followed by 39 \texttt{h5} is equally hopeless. Whenever Black moves his king to \texttt{f8}, the white one enters on \texttt{f6}.

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38 gxh5 gxh5 39 f4 a8 40 xh5
Clearing the path for the passed pawn. Black resigned.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 319.

Facilitating an attack
Now let’s move on to exchanges realized on a more short-term basis. When attacking, the exchange of the opponent’s defending pieces can have a great impact on the battle. Here are some examples.

Example 87
J.Hellsten-L.Johannessen
Asker 1997

![Chess board image]

In a typical structure with hanging pawns White is eager to start an attack, exploiting his strong bishops on b2 and b1.

17 e4!
Intending to swap off the main defender of Black’s kingside, the knight on f6. After that the advance d4-d5 would leave the king on g8 rather unprotected.

17 a5
Black meets the threat of 18 d5 in ad-

vance. It is hard to find any good alternatives; e.g. 17...exf4 18 fxe4 g6 19 d5! exd5 20 cxd5 a5 21 d4 f6 22 xb6 wins a piece, or 17...e8 18 d5! exd5 19 cxd5 a5 20 e5 g6 21 a2! (preparing d5-d6) 21...d6 22 c7 with a devastating attack.

18 d5!
Anyway. This forces the knight exchange under favourable conditions, whereas 18 xf6+ xf6 would obviously have eased Black’s task.

18 exd5
18 exf4 19 fxe4 g6 20 e5 was again hopeless for Black, while 18 d7 permits 19 dxe6 fxe6 20 e5 with decisive threats.

19 xf6+ gxf6
Or 19 xf6 20 d3!, winning the bishop on f6. In the game the doubled pawns leave Black’s kingside undefendable.

19 d4 d4 21 f5 c5 22 g4+ h8 23 h4
With a decisive double threat at f6 and h7. Black resigned.

Example 88
A.Morozevich-A.Beliavsky
European Team Championship, Heraklion 2007

![Chess board image]
In the previous example you might have noticed that the black knight on c6 was unable to help the defence. Here it is much better placed on d7 but, even so, the same method of exchanging its colleague on f6 proved effective.

17 �e4! �xe4

17...Ɂf5? was impossible due to 18 Ɂxf6+ Ɂxf6 19 Ɂxf6 followed by 20 Ɂxg7. 18 Ɂxe4

Now the pressure along the g-file is worrying for Black.

18...Ɂf5

One of several insufficient continuations. Both 18...Ɉae8 19 ɉf4 Ɂf5 20 ɉxd6! and 18...e5 19 Ɂd3! f5 20 ɉd5+ ɉh8 21 ɉxd6 let White recover the pawn with a favourable endgame thanks to the two bishops. Perhaps 18...Ɂe5 was a better choice, although after 19 Ɂf6 Ɂg6 20 ɉf3! e5 (both 20...Ɂxf6 21 ɉh4! and 20...Ɂf5 21 Ɂe4 are equally unpleasant for Black) 21 ɉh4 Ɂd7 22 ɉh5, preparing Ɂxg7 as well as Ɂd3, White enjoys a strong attack.

19 ɉg2 Ɂg6

After 19...g5? 20 Ɂxg5! hxg5 21 ɉxg5+ Ɂg6 22 ɉh6, intending ɉh4, the black king is doomed.

20 Ɂe7 d5

Beliaovsky hands over the exchange, aware that 20...ɉe8 21 ɉxd6 ɉd8 22 Ɂd3! would have been even more unpleasant for him.

21 Ɂxf8 Ɂxf8 22 h4 ɉe5 23 ɉg3!

An idea already familiar to us: exchange pieces in order to realize a material advantage.

23...ɉf6 24 h5 Ɂf5 25 ɉc7 b5 26 ɉc6! Ɂd8 27 cxd5

A clear exchange up, Morozevich won the game without major problems.

Example 89
V.Meijers-L.Bruzon Bautista
Linares 2001

Here is a similar case with reversed colours and flanks. In a tense Sicilian battle, Bruzon accelerates his attack with a knight exchange.

16...ɉb4!

Eliminating the main defender of White’s queenside, as well as of the e4-pawn.

17 Ɂxa4

Here and on the next move 17 fxe6?! fxe6 just gives White an additional problem with a potential ...e6-e5.

17...ɉxa4
Threatening 18...\(\text{a}\)a1+ 19 \(\text{Q}\)d2 \(\text{Q}\)xe4+.

**18 \(\text{B}\)b1 exf5!**

The tempting 18...\(\text{W}\)a5!? permits 19 \(\text{Q}\)b3 \(\text{Q}\)xb3 20 \(\text{c}\)xb3 \(\text{a}\)a1+ 21 \(\text{Q}\)c2 and White is still alive. Now, on the other hand, both recaptures on f5 are bad for him: 19 exf5? fails to 21...\(\text{Q}\)xf5+ at the end of this very variation, while 19 \(\text{Q}\)xf5?! \(\text{W}\)a5 leaves him without the defensive resource \(\text{Q}\)d4-b3. Thus he has to try a third option.

**19 b3 fxe4! 20 \(\text{W}\)h4 \(\text{Q}\)b4 21 \(\text{Q}\)c4 \(\text{W}\)b7 22 g6**

Desperation, but a slower defence such as 22 \(\text{Q}\)a1 failed to 22...d5 23 \(\text{Q}\)e2 \(\text{Q}\)d6 24 \(\text{Q}\)hf1 \(\text{Q}\)e5 with a decisive advantage – Brunzon.

22...\(\text{Q}\)xc4! 23 \(\text{W}\)hxh7 \(\text{Q}\)xh7 24 \(\text{g}\)xh7 \(\text{Q}\)c3 25 \(\text{Q}\)he1

Equally hopeless is 25 \(\text{h}\)h8\(\text{W}\) \(\text{Q}\)xe3 with ideas like...\(\text{Q}\)a4-c3(+) .

**25...\(\text{Q}\)xb3!**

After 26 \(\text{c}\)xb3 \(\text{Q}\)xb3+ 27 \(\text{Q}\)c1 \(\text{Q}\)c3+ 28 \(\text{Q}\)c2 \(\text{Q}\)xc2+ 29 \(\text{Q}\)xc2 \(\text{Q}\)c6+ the queen soon gets to h5, so White resigned.

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**Example 90**

P.Dely-G.Szilagyi

Hungarian Championship,

Budapest 1966

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20 \(\text{W}\)h6+ \(\text{Q}\)f7

Or 20...\(\text{Q}\)g8 21 \(\text{Q}\)f4! \(\text{Q}\)xd4 22 \(\text{Q}\)xd4 e5 23 \(\text{Q}\)d5! and wins – Maric. After the text White should look for a way of dislodging the defender on f6. If the knight was still on c3, then 21 \(\text{Q}\)d5! would have solved this task; in the game Dely finds a different solution.

21 g4! \(\text{Q}\)g8 22 g5 \(\text{Q}\)h5 23 \(\text{Q}\)xh5!

Simplest, clearing more space for the attack.

23...\(\text{Q}\)xh5 24 \(\text{Q}\)xh7+ \(\text{Q}\)f8

After 24...\(\text{Q}\)g7 25 \(\text{Q}\)xh5+ \(\text{Q}\)f8 26 \(\text{Q}\)f4! the attack is also irresistible.

25 \(\text{Q}\)g6 \(\text{Q}\)e8 26 \(\text{Q}\)g1 e5 27 \(\text{Q}\)h6+ \(\text{Q}\)g7
Or 27...\textit{xe}7 28 $\texttt{Wh}5+$ \textit{xf}8 29 $\texttt{Wf}6+$ with mate.

28 $\texttt{Wh}8+$

Black resigned in view of 28...\textit{g}8 29 $\texttt{Wf}6+$.

The exchange of the fianchettoed bishop is equally common in positions with castling on the same flank. Here is one example.

\textbf{Example 91}

J.Hellsten-M.Llorens Sepulveda

Santiago 2005

Faced with the unpleasant threat of 22 e6 followed by h4-h5, Black decides to dissolve the tension in the centre.

\textit{dxe}5

Now, at first glance, 22 \textit{dxe}5 seems natural, in order to activate the knight and maintain an indirect threat towards the rook on b8. However, 22...\textit{d}6 blocks this diagonal, when Black has an inferior but playable position. In the game I recapture the other way instead, to force the exchange of the defender on g7.

22 \textit{dxe}5! \textit{xe}5 23 \textit{dxe}5 \textit{d}6 24 \textit{e}4!

White starts sending his pieces to the kingside, where his attacking prospects have increased after the departure of the fianchettoed bishop. Less consistent was 24 \textit{x}g6? hxg6 25 \textit{x}g6 \textit{bxc}4 26 \textit{exe}7 \textit{f}8 or 24 \textit{x}g6? hxg6 25 \textit{x}g6 \textit{f}5!, while 24 h4? \textit{f}5 lets Black swap the attacking bishop on d3.

24...\textit{wc}7

The desired 24...\textit{xe}4 failed to 25 \textit{exe}4 and 26 d6 on the next move. Thus Black is forced to spend one move covering the c5-pawn.

25 \textit{dg}3 \textit{e}8?

The last chance was 25...\textit{wd}8! intending ...\textit{wf}8-g7 – Stohl. In the game Black’s kingside gets short of defenders.

26 \textit{wc}1! \textit{e}6

This produces new weaknesses, but after 26...f6 27 \textit{wh}6! followed by \textit{h}5, or 26...\textit{d}7 27 \textit{wh}6 \textit{wd}8 28 \textit{x}g6! hxg6 29 \textit{x}g6 fxg6 30 \textit{w}xg6+ \textit{h}8 31 \textit{wh}6+ \textit{g}8 32 \textit{h}5, followed by \textit{g}3+, White’s attack is also irresistible.

27 \textit{dg}4 \textit{e}7

28 \textit{wc}3

My first intention was 28 \textit{wh}6 followed by \textit{h}5, but after 28...\textit{d}7 29 \textit{h}5 \textit{e}8 30 \textit{gf}6+ \textit{xf}6 31 \textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 Black may keep on fighting for a while.

28...\textit{wh}4
Parrying the threat of 29 ♜h6+, but now White breaks through on the e-file.

29 dxe6 fxe6 30 ♜xe6 ♞d8 31 ♦e5 ♛bc8?

This loses on the spot, but after 31...♕dxc4 32 ♘xc4 ♜xc4 33 ♜xe8+? ♝xe8 34 ♦d5+ ♝g7 35 ♜xc4 White also has an easy win.

32 ♜h5! gxh5 33 ♜h6+

Black resigned in view of 33...♖f8 34 ♘h8 mate.

Example 92
V.Kupreichik-M.Taimanov
USSR Championship, Moscow 1976

Here is a final example regarding the exchange of a defending piece. In order to make progress on the kingside, White needs to eliminate the defender of the dark squares, the bishop on e7.

16 ♘h4! ♘xh4

Avoiding the exchange by 16...f6? leads to a disaster after 17 h6, while 16...♗c7? 17 ♘xe7 ♘xe7 permits the tactical shot 18 ♘xh7+. This is also why 17...c4 is impossible on the next move.

17 ♗xh4 ♗b7 18 ♘g4

In just a few moves White has managed to activate his rook and now intends 19 ♘g5 or 19 ♘h6, stepping up the attack.

18...g6

Indispensable, but now the absence of the dark-squared bishop is strongly felt.

19 ♘g5 ♙d7?!

A natural move that prepares 20...♕d8 as a response to 20 h6; however, White soon finds new horizons for his attack. It seems that Black should have preferred the cold-blooded 19...c4 20 h6 f5! instead; e.g. 21 exf6 cxd3 22 f7+! ♗xf7 23 ♘f4+ ♗g8! 24 ♘e7 ♙d7 25 ♘xf8+ ♗xf8 26 ♘xd7 ♗f7 27 ♘xd3 ♘xf2 with unclear play. Of course such variations are difficult to work out during the game.

20 ♘h1!

Now that the mating motif with h5-h6 and ♘f6-g7 has been temporarily neutralized, Kupreichik directs his attention to the h-file.

20...♕d8

It was already too late for 20...c4 in view of 21 ♘e4!; e.g. 21...cxd3 22 ♘f6+ ♗h8 23 ♘xd7 ♘c7 24 c3 ♘xd7 25 ♘f6+ followed by 26 h6, or 21...♕xe4 22 ♘xe4 ♘ad8 23 ♘f6 ♘d4 24 ♘d3! ♘xg4 25 h6 winning – Suetin.

21 ♘h6 ♘xd3

The only way to avoid a decisive sacrifice on g6.
22 cxd3 \(\text{w}x\text{d}3\) 23 \(\text{f}4!\)

Creating the threat of 24 \text{h}x\text{g}6 \text{f}x\text{g}6 25 \(\text{xf}8+\).

23...\text{w}d7 24 \text{g}5

Preparing 25 \(\text{e}4\). White is clearly better and soon won the game.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 321.

**Facilitating the defence**

In the previous section we saw how certain exchanges had the effect of facilitating an attack. Now let’s turn our attention to the opposite case: the exchange of the opponent’s attacking pieces in order to ease our defensive task. One typical idea in this sense is the exchange of queens which, if successful, tends to ruin most attacks.

\[\text{Example 93}\]

\text{J.Granda Zuniga-F.Santacruz}

\text{Pan-American Team Championship 1987}

It is not difficult to guess Black’s plan in this position: a kingside attack. Granda finds a simple, effective solution.

19 \text{w}e2!

Without queens the black attack would lose all its venom. Moreover, White’s long-term advantages, such as his bishop pair and superior structure, would become more notable. Less convincing is 19 \text{d}xe6?! \text{h}6 20 \text{h}4 \text{g}x\text{g}2 21 \text{x}g2 \text{e}4 22 \text{w}e2 \text{w}xe2 23 \text{d}xe2 \text{d}xe6 with an inferior version of the game. White no longer possesses the bishop pair, and Black has an active knight on \text{e}4.

19...\text{w}xe2

A clear concession, but the alternatives were even worse: 19...\text{w}h6? fails to 20 \text{d}xe6 \text{g}x\text{g}2 21 \text{x}g2 and the \text{f}5-pawn is doomed, while 19...\text{g}4?! 20 \text{h}3 \text{h}6 21 \text{e}4! \text{e}8 22 \text{c}1 \text{g}5 23 \text{d}xe6, followed by 24 \text{f}5, leaves the black position in ruins.

20 \text{d}xe2 \text{e}5

Parrying the threat of 21 \text{d}4 with an attack on the \text{f}5-pawn.

21 \text{c}3 \text{d}8d7 22 \text{f}4!

Softening up the long diagonal for the bishop, as well as the \text{f}-file.

22...\text{g}4

Black defends against the threat of 23 \text{f}xe5 and prepares the regrouping of the badly placed rook on \text{g}6.

23 \text{f}e1!

Not 23 \text{d}e1?! \text{c}5 with threats at \text{b}3 and \text{d}3. Now 23...\text{c}5?! runs into 24 \text{h}3 \text{h}6
25 fxe5 dxe5 26 b5! with pressure on c7 and e5.
23...f6 24 h3 h6 25 b5 c8 26 a7
26 b4 at once was also interesting, to keep the rook tied to the defence of c7.
26...e8 27 b4
Stepping up the pressure on the queenside. White enjoys a slight but enduring advantage, whereas Black never even got close to his desired attack.

Another common target for the “defensive” exchange is the king’s bishop, which tends to play an important role in many kingside attacks. Let’s see two examples.

**Example 94**

V. Simagin-T. V. Petrosian
USSR Championship, Moscow 1951

![Chess Diagram]

As often is the case in such structures, the side with the isolated pawn aims at a kingside attack. Petrosian finds a great defensive measure.
23...a8!
Preparing ...b7-e4 to swap the attacking bishop on b1.
24 w2 e4! 25 e1

If White sidesteps by 25 a2, then after 25...d6 the black bishop becomes excellent along the b1-h7 diagonal, both for defensive and aggressive purposes.
25...xb1 26 xb1 d5

In the absence of his light-squared bishop, White’s attacking prospects have worsened considerably, something that he now fails to accept.
27 g4?
Better was 27 f4 followed by b1, battling for the c-file. In the game White faces more problems on the light squares.
27...xe5 28 xe5 d7!

A move with various virtues: it secures the knight from the g4-g5 advance, attacks the h4-pawn, and prepares another “defensive” exchange on e5.
29 w3?
This leads to a lost endgame. Equally bad was 29 xd7? wd7, dropping one of the pawns on d4 and h4, while 29 f3 c4, followed by ...ec8, leaves Black with a pleasant, though not winning advantage.
29...xe5 30 xd5 exd5 31 dxe5 xh4 32 e2 f6! 33 e6

After 33 f4 c4 or 33 f4 fxe5 34 fxe5 c4 White loses another pawn.
33...c6 34 e3 exe6
Black later won.
Example 95
E.Mortensen-J.Adamski
Copenhagen 1998

Here is a more complex example on the same topic. Structurally speaking, Black has a sound position. However, his king is under a cloud for the moment, with all the enemy pieces directed against him.

18...\textbf{W}b6!

An excellent defensive measure. Adamski prepares 19...\textbf{A}a6 to exchange the powerful bishop on d3, thus reducing the potential of the white attack.

The more indifferent 18...\textbf{C}c5?! runs into 19 \textbf{Q}f6+! \textbf{Q}xf6 (or 19...gx\textbf{f}6 20 \textbf{A}xh7+! \textbf{Q}xh7 21 \textbf{W}h5+ followed by 22 \textbf{W}f3) 20 ex\textbf{f}6 \textbf{A}xf6 21 \textbf{A}xh7+! \textbf{Q}xh7 22 \textbf{A}xf6! with a strong attack; e.g. 22...gx\textbf{f}6 23 \textbf{W}h5+ \textbf{G}g8 24 \textbf{G}g4+! \textbf{Q}h8 25 \textbf{E}e3 with mate, or 22...\textbf{G}e4 23 \textbf{Q}f4 \textbf{Q}xd2 24 \textbf{W}h5+! \textbf{G}g8 25 \textbf{E}h4 f5 26 \textbf{Q}xe6 with the mortal threat of 27 \textbf{W}h7+.

19 c3

The only way of continuing the attack, since the tempting 19 \textbf{W}e4 permits 19...\textbf{W}xd4+! 20 \textbf{W}xd4 \textbf{C}c5 with a welcome queen exchange.

19...\textbf{b}xc3 20 \textbf{b}xc3 \textbf{A}a6!

Now that 21 c4? doesn't work White is forced to accept the bishop exchange.

21 \textbf{Q}h1

After 21 \textbf{A}xa6 \textbf{W}xa6 22 c4 \textbf{C}c5! Black obtains counterplay, while 21 \textbf{F}f3?! instead, preparing 22 \textbf{H}h3, can be met by 21...\textbf{X}xd3 22 \textbf{W}xd3 \textbf{C}c5; e.g. 23 \textbf{W}c2 f5! 24 ex\textbf{f}6 \textbf{X}xf6 25 \textbf{H}h3 g6 26 \textbf{H}h6 \textbf{F}f7 27 \textbf{W}e2 \textbf{H}h8 28 \textbf{A}d2 \textbf{C}g7 with rather unclear play.

21...\textbf{X}xd3 22 \textbf{W}xd3 \textbf{C}c5 23 \textbf{W}g3

The immediate 23 \textbf{B}h6+? fails to 23...gx\textbf{h}6 24 \textbf{W}g3+ \textbf{H}h8 25 \textbf{A}xh6 \textbf{G}g8 etc. But now 24 \textbf{B}h6+ has turned into a threat.

23...f5!

Adamski accepts a weak pawn on e6 in order to neutralize the enemy attack.

24 ex\textbf{f}6 \textbf{X}xf6

Not 24...\textbf{X}xf6? 25 \textbf{Q}f5! ex\textbf{f}5 26 \textbf{H}h6+ \textbf{H}h8 27 \textbf{A}xe7 etc.

25 \textbf{X}xf6+

The seemingly clever 25 \textbf{X}xe6?! \textbf{X}xe6 26 c4 fails to 26...\textbf{W}a6! with the diabolic idea 27 cxd5 \textbf{H}h4! and Black wins; but 25 \textbf{C}c1 was probably a better option, with an improved version of the game.

25...\textbf{X}xf6 26 \textbf{H}h6 \textbf{W}b7

Black defends g7 and seizes the long diagonal at the same time. Moreover, White already has to be careful with a knight jump to e4.
27 $\text{\textsection}c1$

Not a very appealing move, but on 27 $\text{\textsection}xe6$ Black had prepared 27...$\text{\textsection}xe6$ 28 $\text{\textsection}xe6$ $\text{\textsection}e4!$ winning the bishop.

27...$\text{\textsection}e4$ 28 $\text{\textsection}e3$ $\text{\textsection}d5$

Thanks to his central control, Black is considerably better.

\textbf{Example 96}

\textbf{B.Spassky-T.V.Petrosian}

World Championship (game 1), Moscow 1969

The queen's bishop can also be the object of the "defensive" exchange, as in the present example.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

16...$\text{\textsection}f6!$

A strong move neutralizing the enemy bishop. Others, such as 16...$\text{\textsection}xb3!$, allow White to carry out his main threat: 17 $\text{fxg6}$ $\text{hxg6}$ 18 $\text{\textsection}xg6!$ $\text{fxg6}$ 19 $\text{\textsection}e6+$ $\text{\textsection}h7$ 20 $\text{\textsection}f7!$ with mate to come.

17 $\text{\textsection}xf6$

Now after 17 $\text{fxg6!}$ $\text{\textsection}xb2$ 18 $\text{gxf7+}$ $\text{\textsection}xf7$ White's attack proves unconvincing; e.g. 19 $\text{\textsection}xf7$ $\text{\textsection}xf7$ 20 $\text{\textsection}h5+$ $\text{\textsection}f8$ 21 $\text{\textsection}f1+$ $\text{\textsection}f6$ 22 $\text{\textsection}xh7$ $\text{\textsection}e7$ 23 $\text{\textsection}h8+$ $\text{\textsection}f7$ and Black defends.

17...$\text{\textsection}xf6$ 18 $\text{\textsection}f2$ $\text{axb3}$ 19 $\text{axb3}$ $\text{\textsection}a2$

With the opponent being short of direct threats, Petrosian launches a counterattack.

20 $\text{fxg6}$?

The opening of the $f$-file will merely help Black in creating counterplay. Preferable was 20 $\text{\textsection}b1$ $\text{\textsection}a5$ 21 $\text{\textsection}h4$ with a slight edge – Geller.

20...$\text{fxg6}$ 21 $\text{h3}$ $\text{\textsection}e7$ 22 $\text{\textsection}d4!$

A strange mistake that lets Black improve his bishop. Better was 22 $\text{cxd5}$ $\text{\textsection}xd5$ 23 $\text{\textsection}xf8+$ $\text{\textsection}xf8$ 24 $\text{\textsection}xf8+$ $\text{\textsection}xf8$ 25 $\text{\textsection}c4$ with an equal endgame.

22...$\text{c5}$ 23 $\text{\textsection}f4$ $\text{\textsection}b7!$ 24 $\text{\textsection}de1$ $\text{\textsection}g7$ 25 $\text{\textsection}e3$ $\text{d4!}$ 26 $\text{\textsection}e6+$ $\text{\textsection}f7$ 27 $\text{\textsection}e2$ $\text{\textsection}e8$

Black has an active game and went on to win.

In the following example Black managed to neutralize the enemy attack by a timely exchange of an attacking knight.

\textbf{Example 97}

\textbf{K.De Francesco-A.Gipslis}

Passau 1997

White has just played $\text{d2-e4}$, with a focus on Black's kingside as well as the $d6$-square.
16...\texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{x}}}xe4!}

Eliminating the strong enemy knight. In contrast, the indifferent 16...\texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}c5?} allows the nice combination 17 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}f6+!} gxf6 18 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}g4+! \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}h8} 19 exf6 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xf6} 20 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}h4!} winning.

\textbf{17 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xe4}}

Or 17 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xe4} g6 with similar play.

\textbf{17...g6}

Restricting White’s light-squared bishop and ruling out a sacrifice on h7.

\textbf{18 f4}

After the departure of his knight it is far more difficult for White to launch an attack, and he has to accept a more positional battle. If 18 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}ad1}, then 18...\texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}c7} 19 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}d3} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}fd8} with a balanced game.

\textbf{18...\texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}c5} 19 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}c2} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}d7} 20 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}ad1} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}c6} 21 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}f3} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}a4!}}

Now White’s compromised queenside structure makes itself felt.

\textbf{22 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}a1} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}fd8!}}

Avoiding 22...\texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xc4} 23 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xc4} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xc4} 24 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}b3} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}e4} 25 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}c2} with a perpetual.

\textbf{23 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xd8+} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xd8} 24 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}d3}}

By swapping rooks White aims to reduce the pressure on the c4-pawn.

\textbf{24...\texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xd3} 25 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xd3} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}c5} 26 \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{W}}}e2} \texttt{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}b7!}}

Heading for a5 in order to resume the attack on c4. Despite White’s bishop pair, Black has a more pleasant endgame.

For the related exercises, see page 323.

\textbf{Reducing enemy activity}

Another objective of piece exchanges is the reduction of the opponent’s overall activity. During the course of a game, the activity of each piece goes up and down. Logically, it makes sense to swap off an enemy piece that is enjoying high activity, and this is the subject of the following examples.

\textbf{Example 98}

\textbf{J.Hellsten-P.Lafuente}

\textbf{Pinamar 2004}
White has obtained some queenside initiative in this isolani structure, but it is not obvious how he can make progress. A closer look reveals that Black's position is sustained by his queen, which blocks (and attacks) the isolated pawn, while covering crucial squares like d7 and c6. In this context, my next move is easy to understand.

24 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{We4}}}!

Challenging the black queen, whose absence would open up tactical ideas such as \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qd7-b6(f6),}}} as well as \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Af4}}} fighting for \texttt{b7}. 24 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Af4?}}}! \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{a8}}} 25 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxb7}}} at once is less effective due to 25...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxd4}}} recovering the pawn. 24...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{De7}}?}

In time trouble my opponent overlooks the threat of 25 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qf4}}}. Equally bad was 24...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wd8?}}} 25 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Af4}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{a8}}} 26 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxb7}}} or 24...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qg7?}}} 25 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxd5}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{exd5}}} 26 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qd7}}}! \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{a8}}} 27 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qb6}}}, while 24...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxe4?}}} 25 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{fxe}}4 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{yields}}} White an excellent pawn structure, with \texttt{d4-d5} coming up. Finally, after 24...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxc5}}} 25 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxd5}}} (25 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{dxc5??}}} is interesting as well) 25...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{exd5}}} 26 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{dx}}c5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ad8}}} 27 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qf4}}} followed by 28 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qd6}}} White is also better, but this was Black's least evil.

25 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Af4}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{a8}}} 26 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxb7}}}

Now White is just a clear pawn up.

26...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f5}}} 27 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxd5}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxd5}}} 28 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxc8!}}}

Having an extra pawn I am, of course, happy to exchange pieces.

28...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxc8}}} 29 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qc1!}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qc3}}}

Or 29...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxc1+}}} 30 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxc1}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qg7}}} 31 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qb2}}}, hanging on to the pawn.

30 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxc3}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxc3}}} 31 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qe5}}}

White returns material in order to create a far advanced passed pawn.

31...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qb1}}} 32 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qc5}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxc5}}} 33 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{dx}}c5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qxa3}}} 34 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c6}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qb5}}} 35 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qf2}}} 36 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qf8}}} 37 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c7}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qa7}}} 38 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Qe3}}}

Heading for \texttt{c5}. With a strong passed pawn and superior minor piece, White is winning.

\textbf{Example 99}

\textbf{A.Moiseenko-D.Yevseev}

\textit{Cappelle la Grande 2006}
Black has just played ...f7-f5?, unnecessarily weakening the light squares. Moiseenko immediately punishes his opponent.

26 \textit{\textsf{\textup{\texttt{xc4}}}}!

An excellent idea. In the absence of the bishop on d5 it will be easier for White to attack the weakness on e6, and he also gains access to the c6-square.

26...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{xc4}}} 27 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xc4}}} f7

Both 27...f4 28 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{e5!}}} and 27...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{fc8}}} 28 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{a2!}}} leave the e6-pawn in danger – Moiseenko.

28 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{ac1}}} e8 29 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{c7}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{wf8}}} 30 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{e5!}}}?

Another good option was 30 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xa7}}} xc7 31 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xc7}}} winning a pawn, since 31...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{a8}}} fails to 32 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xe7+}}} h8 33 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xa7+}}} g8 34 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{g7+}}} h8 35 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{f7!}}}, and wherever the black queen goes, 36 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{h7+}}} decides.

30...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{fe7}}}

If 30...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{d6}}}, the simplest reply is to exchange: 31 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xd6}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xd6}}} 32 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{c1}}} with a superior endgame.

31 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xe7}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xe7}}} 32 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{c6}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{g5}}} 33 h4!

In view of the line 33 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xe6??}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xe6}}} 34 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xe6}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{c8+}}}, it makes sense to give the king a little space.

33...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{f7}}} 34 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{c5}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{d8}}} 35 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{c8l}}} e8 36 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xa7}}}

With an extra pawn and more active pieces, White soon won the game.

Here is an example from a later stage of the game. White is slightly better thanks to his space advantage and more active pieces. How should Black proceed?

29...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{wa8}}}? 

An instructive error. At first sight it seems logical to swap the active white queen, but as we will soon see in the game, it is in fact the white rook that poses the most danger to Black. Thus 29...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{d8!}}} was a better choice, disputing the open file, and after 30 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xd8+}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xd8}}} the black queen proves just as active as its counterpart.

Generally in similar positions, the side with less space is happy to keep his queen on the board, since it can easily attack weak spots in the “open land” of the enemy camp, like d3, d1 and a4 in this case. Moreover, a queen exchange makes it easier for the opponent to exploit his space advantage with the king, as in the continuation of this game.

30 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xa8}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{xa8}}} 31 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{a5l}}} \textit{\textsf{\texttt{f8}}}

Black has no time for 31...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{d8?}}} due to 32 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{b1!}}}, with 33 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{c6}}} next – Shereshevsky.
32 \( \mathbb{f}4 \) \( \mathbb{e}8 \) 33 \( \mathbb{f}2! \)

The king is heading for e4 to protect the e5-pawn, thus liberating the other pieces.

33...\( \mathbb{g}5 \)

Being short of better options Black opts for active defence. 33...\( \mathbb{f}7?! \) followed by ...\( \mathbb{e}7 \) would just expose the king to a check on c6.

34 \( \mathbb{h}5 \)

Curiously, both knights are excellently located at the edge of the board.

34...\( \mathbb{e}7 \) 35 \( \mathbb{e}3 \) \( \mathbb{f}7 \) 36 \( \mathbb{f}1+ \) \( \mathbb{g}6 \) 37 \( \mathbb{g}4! \)

A move with several virtues: it secures the knight on h5, fixes Black’s g-pawn on the colour of his bishop, and creates mating motifs.

37...\( \mathbb{h}6 \) 38 \( \mathbb{b}1 \) \( \mathbb{d}8 \) 39 \( \mathbb{e}4 \)

32 \( \mathbb{f}4 \) \( \mathbb{e}8 \) 33 \( \mathbb{f}2! \)

The king is heading for e4 to protect the e5-pawn, thus liberating the other pieces.

33...\( \mathbb{g}5 \)

Being short of better options Black opts for active defence. 33...\( \mathbb{f}7?! \) followed by ...\( \mathbb{e}7 \) would just expose the king to a check on c6.

34 \( \mathbb{h}5 \)

Curiously, both knights are excellently located at the edge of the board.

34...\( \mathbb{e}7 \) 35 \( \mathbb{e}3 \) \( \mathbb{f}7 \) 36 \( \mathbb{f}1+ \) \( \mathbb{g}6 \) 37 \( \mathbb{g}4! \)

A move with several virtues: it secures the knight on h5, fixes Black’s g-pawn on the colour of his bishop, and creates mating motifs.

37...\( \mathbb{h}6 \) 38 \( \mathbb{b}1 \) \( \mathbb{d}8 \) 39 \( \mathbb{e}4 \)

Very methodical. White is not in a hurry, and aims at advancing the pawn to a5, where it will deprive the black pieces of the b6-square.

45...\( \mathbb{f}8 \)

This loses a pawn but it was hard to suggest anything better; e.g. 45...a5 46 \( \mathbb{b}3 \) \( \mathbb{b}6 \) 47 \( \mathbb{b}5 \) and the rook enters with decisive effect.

46 \( \mathbb{e}7+ \) \( \mathbb{h}7 \) 47 \( \mathbb{x}f8 \) \( \mathbb{x}f8 \) 48 \( \mathbb{f}6+! \) \( \mathbb{g}7 \)

49 \( \mathbb{e}8+ \) \( \mathbb{f}7 \) 50 \( \mathbb{x}c7 \) \( \mathbb{x}e7 \) 51 \( \mathbb{a}6 \) \( \mathbb{d}7 \)

52 \( \mathbb{c}7 \)

Avoiding 52 a5?? \( \mathbb{d}8 \) and the knight is trapped. Miles realized his extra pawn easily.

Example 101

B.Avrukh-S.Grigoriants
Russian Team Championship 2008

A well-known strategical principle is that the side with more space should avoid exchanges. We already saw an example of this in Hellsten-Brljaca (p. 35), and here is another case from a popular theoretical line in the Slav Defence.

42 \( \mathbb{b}3 \) \( \mathbb{d}8 \) 43 \( \mathbb{c}6 \) \( \mathbb{c}7 \) 44 \( \mathbb{f}3! \)

The rook quickly switches files, a typical method when working on several fronts.

44...\( \mathbb{d}7 \) 45 a4!

14...\( \mathbb{f}d7 \)

A sensible move, in order to swap the active knight on e5, something that would
also free some space at the back for Black’s own pieces.

15 \( \text{\texttt{d3!}} \)

Having more space White declines the knight exchange. This has the effect of leaving Black’s minor pieces rather cramped, in particular the knight on b6.

15...\( \text{\texttt{d6}} \)

By vacating the e7-square Black solves the deployment of his queen. The more straightforward 15...\( \text{\texttt{c8}} \), preparing ...\( \text{\texttt{c6-c5}} \), could be met by 16 \( \text{\texttt{wb3}} \) \( \text{\texttt{c5}} \) 17 \( \text{\texttt{dxc5 e5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{bxc5}} \) 18 \( \text{\texttt{xc5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xc5}} \) 19 \( \text{\texttt{xc5 dxc5}} \) 20 \( \text{\texttt{dd1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{c7}} \) 21 \( \text{\texttt{b5 wc6}} \) 22 0-0 with an edge for White.

16 \( \text{\texttt{c1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e7}} \) 17 \( \text{\texttt{wb3!}} \)

Before castling Avrukh puts some pressure on b6 in order to prevent the liberating ...\( \text{\texttt{c6-c5}} \) and ...\( \text{\texttt{e6-e5}} \) advances.

17...\( \text{\texttt{c7}} \)

Prophylaxis against a potential \( \text{\texttt{d4-d5}} \).

18 0-0 \( \text{\texttt{xc8}} \) 19 \( \text{\texttt{h1}} \)

White is in no hurry for the moment and reserves to a few useful moves while waiting for the opponent’s next step.

19...\( \text{\texttt{wh8}} \) 20 \( \text{\texttt{f1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{g5?!}} \)

The active 20...\( \text{\texttt{f5}} \) is well met by 21 \( \text{\texttt{e5!}} \) \( \text{\texttt{f4}} \) 22 \( \text{\texttt{ed1}}, \) preparing \( \text{\texttt{e1}} \) and \( \text{\texttt{e4}}, \) attacking the \( \text{\texttt{a5}} \)-pawn – Avrukh. Even so, Black should probably prefer this, since in the game his bishop on h7 remains out of play for too long.

21 \( \text{\texttt{f1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{fe8?!}} \)

By undefending \( \text{\texttt{f7}} \) Black allows a blow on the dark squares. 21...\( \text{\texttt{f5}} \) was still preferable, although after 22 \( \text{\texttt{xc5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xc5}} \) 23 \( \text{\texttt{dxc5 d7}} \) 24 \( \text{\texttt{cd1}} \) White keeps the advantage.

22 \( \text{\texttt{e5!}} \)

An unexpected return. Now it is difficult for Black to cover all his weak squares.

22...\( \text{\texttt{xe5}} \)

A lesser evil was 22...\( \text{\texttt{we7}} \) 23 \( \text{\texttt{xd7}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xd7}} \) 24 \( \text{\texttt{d5!}} \) \( \text{\texttt{wd6}} \) 25 \( \text{\texttt{g3}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e5}} \) 26 \( \text{\texttt{dxc6 bxc6}} \) 27 \( \text{\texttt{ed1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{we7}} \) 28 \( \text{\texttt{f2}} \) \( \text{\texttt{b8}} \) 29 \( \text{\texttt{wc2}} \) with a clear edge for White due to the weak pawns on \( \text{\texttt{a5}} \) and \( \text{\texttt{c6}} \) – Avrukh.

23 \( \text{\texttt{dxe5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{d7}} \)

23...\( \text{\texttt{xe5?!}} \) 24 \( \text{\texttt{f4!}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xf4}} \) 25 \( \text{\texttt{g3}} \) wins a piece.

24 \( \text{\texttt{wb7}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xe5}} \) 25 \( \text{\texttt{g3!}} \)

Now the tension along the \( \text{\texttt{b2-b8}} \) diagonal is unpleasant for Black.

25...\( \text{\texttt{we7}} \) 26 \( \text{\texttt{b5?!}} \) \( \text{\texttt{b8}} \)

After 26...\( \text{\texttt{xb5}} \) 27 \( \text{\texttt{xe5}} \) the double pin is decisive.

27 \( \text{\texttt{xe7}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xe7}} \) 28 \( \text{\texttt{ed1}} \)

Occupying the open file and preparing \( \text{\texttt{d6}} \) in order to seize the dark squares.

28...\( \text{\texttt{f8}} \) 29 \( \text{\texttt{d6}} \) \( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) 30 \( \text{\texttt{xe5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xe5}} \) 31 \( \text{\texttt{xc6}} \)

With a sound extra pawn White won without any problems.
Example 102
M. Neubauer - O. Korneev
European Championship, Warsaw 2005

Now let’s see the “active” exchange in a more defensive context. White has just played 18...d4 activating his knight. What should Black do about his bishop?

18...c8!

Korneev declares that he has nothing against swapping his bishop for the active knight, and prepares to meet 19...xc6 by 19...xc6, keeping the pawn structure intact. The alternatives were all inferior: 18...d5?! allows 19...f5! exf5 20...xd5 with double threats at f5 and b5, while both 18...0-0?! 19...xc6 bxc6 20...d6 and 18...d7 19...b5 0-0 20...d6 yield White a definite initiative.

19...b5

After 19...xc6...xc6 Black has no problems whatsoever. He can later restrict the white bishop by ...g7-g6, just like in De Francesco-Gipslis (p. 115).

19...xb5 20...xb5+...f8

Avoiding 20...c6?! 21...d6! a6 22...xc6 axb5 23...c8+...d7 24...xh8 with complications. In the game Black is left without the option of castling; however, White doesn’t have the right pieces on the board in order to exploit this.

21...d4 g6 22...ad1...g7

By now it is unclear how White can improve his position, whereas Black enjoys a long-term target on c3.

23 h4...c7! 24...e2 h5

Ruling out any attacking attempt with h4-h5.

25 g3...c8 26...d2 b5

Also interesting was 26...b6 preparing ...b7-a5 with increased pressure on c3. Now White is able to get rid of that pawn.

27 c4...c4 28...xc4...d7!

Asking White to solve some minor tactical problems.
29  %c7 %c7 30  %b3?
This just loses a pawn. 30  %a5 was preferable, intending 30...%xc2 31  %xa7 with simplifications. Instead, Black could try 30...%b6 31  %b3 %c5 32  %b4 %c7 with a slight edge thanks to his more active knight.

30...%xe5
Black later converted his extra pawn into victory.

Example 103
J.Hellsten-J.Veloz
Ambato 2009

22  %xe8
The immediate 22  %b5?! permits 22...%xe1! 23  %xe1 %b6 with much more resistance than in the game.

22...%xe8
Obviously 22...%xe8? fails to 23  %xf5, while 22...%xe8 can be met in the same way as in the game.

23  %b5!
A key move. Among Black’s minor pieces it is the knight on d7 that holds most importance for the moment, since it controls the weak f6-square and blocks the passed d-pawn. Thus White wants to exchange it.

23...a6
Practically forced, in view of the additional threat 24 g4.

24  %xd7 %xd7 25  %c5!
White prepares a future knight jump to e4 and supports the advance of the d-pawn.

25...%c8 26 d6! %d8
Black couldn’t play 26...%xd6 due to 27 %e4 followed by 28 %f6+.

27 %e4 b6
After the alternative 27...f5 28 %h4! (or 28 %d4), preparing %f6+, Black is also in deep trouble.

28 %f6+ %h8 29  %ce4

White has reached his goal. The strong knight on f6 not only supports a future d6-d7, it also enhances a future kingside attack.

29...%f5 30  %xb6
30  %d1! was even stronger, when 30...%xd6 31 %h4 h5 32 %xh5! gxh5 33 %f6+ followed by 34  %d5 leads to a decisive attack.
30...xd6 31 d1 b7
Black has managed to eliminated the passed d-pawn, but his king remains under a cloud.
32 xd8 xd8
Or 32...xd8 33 we3! with the double threat of 34 wh6 and 34 wc3.
33 wd4 e6 34 c3 g7 35 g5 e6
Black has to give up a pawn to stop 36 xf7+.
36 gxh7 wd6 37 g5
Here I missed 37 e8! wb6+ 38 h1 with an immediate win, but the text doesn’t ruin anything.
37...wb6+ 38 h1 wd6?
This loses at once, though Black’s position was hopeless anyway.
39 wc8+! xc8 40 xf7 mate

Example 104
L.Psakhis-M.Drasko
Sochi 1988

14 xd4!
Giving up the bishop pair to eliminate the active knight on d4, after which the white pieces will get access to squares like b3 and b5.
14...xd4
Following 14...xd4 15 b5 c6 16 f3! Black is unable to defend the d4-pawn.
15 b3 xd8
Repeating White’s idea with 15...xb3? ends in a disaster after 16 xb3+ h8 17 b5 d7 18 h3 – Psakhis.
16 a5! c6
The only reply, since both 16...b8? 17 b5 and 16...d5? 17 xd5 xd5 18 xd5+ xd5 19 b3 lead to material losses.
17 b5!
Psakhis hurries to soften up the light squares before Black manages to consolidate. The loss of the a3-pawn is less relevant.
17...a3 18 c2

In this typical position from the English White would like to increase the pressure on the queenside; however, a normal continuation such as 14 ce4 is well met by 14...a5!
15 c5 d5 with roughly equal play. Psakhis finds a much stronger solution.

18 h3
Drasko returns the pawn in order to eliminate the strong fianchettoed bishop. Both 18...xb5? 19 xb5 and 18...b4? 19 bxc6 xa5 20 cxb7 again lead to material losses, as does 18...d5 19 bxc6 bxc6 20 xd5 xd5 21 xc6! – Psakhis. Perhaps
the prophylactic 18...\texttt{f8}!? was Black’s best choice; e.g. 19 \texttt{bxc6} \texttt{bxc6} 20 \texttt{\texttt{x}c6} \texttt{\texttt{e}8} 21 \texttt{\texttt{a}5 \texttt{b}8} and the discovered attacks can be met by 22...\texttt{a}6.

\texttt{19 \texttt{x}h3 \texttt{xh3} 20 \texttt{\texttt{x}b7 \texttt{m}c8} 21 \texttt{\texttt{b}1}!}

By means of a double attack on \texttt{a3} and \texttt{c6}, White wins a pawn.

\texttt{21...\texttt{b4} 22 \texttt{\texttt{m}c6 \texttt{m}c6} 23 \texttt{bxc6 \texttt{e}6} 24 \texttt{\texttt{w}c2 \texttt{m}c8} 25 \texttt{\texttt{c}1}}

Hanging on to the extra pawn with a clear advantage.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 325.

\textbf{Series of exchanges}

An interesting strategical idea is a series of exchanges that produces a favourable piece configuration on the board, for example good knight vs. bad bishop. In fact we already came across this topic in Sasikiran-Illjushin and Hellsten-Olesen. Here are a few more examples.

\textbf{Example 105}

\textbf{J.Hodgson-J.Sherwin}

\textbf{Frome 2001}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

16 \texttt{\texttt{d}4! \texttt{dxe4}}

On 16...\texttt{fxe4} White could react in the same way as in the game.

17 \texttt{f3!}

Clearing the centre in order to exploit Black’s weaknesses in a more effective way, just like Sasikiran did in the aforementioned game.

17...\texttt{\texttt{exf}3} 18 \texttt{\texttt{exf3}}

By now the merits of the plan initiated on move 14 are evident: the knight is a giant on \texttt{e5}, whereas Black has ended up with a typical “bad” bishop.
18...\ Axe8 19 c5 \ Axe8?!  
19...\ Axe8 seems more natural, giving the bishop some slight hope of seeing daylight.
20 \ Axe2

Well aware of his long-term advantage, Hodgson is not in a hurry and slowly reinforces his position.
20...\ Axe5 21 \ Axe1 \ Axe8 22 \ Axe3

22 \ Axe8?! \ Axe8 with complications makes no sense for White, either here or later.
22...\ Axe6 23 \ Axe1 \ Axe6 24 \ Axe1 \ Axe4

This leads to new weaknesses, but it was difficult to find any active plan for Black.
25 \ Axe3 \ Axe7 26 \ Axe4!

Creating the threat of 27 \ Axe4 \ Axe4 28 \ Axe4.
26...\ Axe8 27 \ Axe4 \ Axe4 28 \ Axe4!

Now that the rook left \ Axe8 White manages to regroup the knight without losing the d4-pawn.
28...\ Axe8?

A tactical mistake in a difficult position.
29 \ Axe6! \ Axe7

It transpires that 29...\ Axe8 fails to 30 \ Axe8 \ Axe8 31 \ Axe7+. Thus White wins the exchange.
30 \ Axe8 \ Axe8 31 \ Axe8

Hodgson soon realized his material advantage.

Example 106  
E.Poliviou-J.Hellsten  
Patras 2002

In a typical Sicilian battle White has just played the impulsive g2-g4, which gives me the opportunity to carry out a favourable series of exchanges.
15...\ Axe5!

Deliberately loosening the d5-square in order to get a grip on the dark squares.
16 \ Axe5 \ Axe5!

By maintaining the tension Black enables the later exchange of his “bad” bishop on e7. 16...\ Axe5? 17 \ Axe5 \ Axe8 is less convincing due to 18 \ Axe3 \ Axe4 19 \ Axe4 \ Axe5 20 \ Axe4, restricting that piece.
17 \ Axe5?

This lets me fulfill my plan. 17 \ Axe3 was correct, when 17...\ Axe4 18 \ Axe4 \ Axe5, preparing ...h7-h6 and ...\ Axe7-g5, yields Black a pleasant game but nothing more.
17...\ Axe5 18 \ Axe3

After 18 \ Axe3? \ Axe5 19 \ Axe3 \ Axe5 White has a problem with the e4-pawn.
18...\ Axe5+ 19 \ Axe5! \ Axe5!

Swapping off the last piece capable of challenging the black knight.
20 \ Axe5 \ Axe5
Mastering Chess Strategy

Black has reached his goal. The knight is excellently placed on e5, and it can’t be exchanged. In contrast, White’s bishop is restricted by his own pawns. Moreover, the g2-g4 advance has left weak squares on f4 and h4. In conclusion, White is facing a difficult defensive task.

21  
Now my plan is to swap both pairs of rooks in order to avoid counterplay and obtain the strong duo of queen and knight in the endgame. But first, considering the colour of the enemy bishop, it makes sense to put the pawns on dark squares.

22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33  
Another strategical mistake: White deliberately places his pawns on the same colour squares as his bishop. He also weakens the c3-square, from where the knight will be able to attack his a-pawn. 27 a3 was much better, avoiding these problems and enabling pawn exchanges, which tend to help the defender.

27... 28 29 30 31 32 33  
The threat of 29...  forces the bishop to retreat, after which the second pair of rooks can be exchanged.

34  
Gaining more dark square control and fixing the enemy pawns on light squares.

If White abandons the c-file by 35 , then 35... 36 a4! intending ...a4-a3 to fix a future target on a2.

The position is unpleasant for White, who has to parry numerous enemy threats.

Or 37 h1 38 g2 e3 winning the e4-pawn.

White’s first tactical error in this game proves decisive. However, after 39 h2 40 f2 e5+ his position was also hopeless. A possible plan for Black is to place the knight on f4, the queen on c3 and finally activate the king via f6 and e5. Any minor piece endgame is lost for White due to the bad bishop; e.g. 41 g3? f6 and the black king enters with decisive effect.

In view of 40 f2 h2+, White resigned.

Example 107

L. Shamkovich-Joe. Benjamin
Las Vegas 1995

126
In this closed position Benjamin initiates a favourable series of exchanges, with a focus on the passive enemy bishop on g2 as well as the weak f4-square.

17...a6! 18 Ne1

18...xe2!

It might seem strange to swap the “good” bishop but it is probably the other bishop that is worth more in this particular structure, thanks to the excellent c1-h6 diagonal. Moreover, Black avoids the plan of 19 g3 and 20 f1 with White trying to get rid of his worst piece.

19 wxe2 e8

Heading for the protected square at f4.

20 e3 g6 21 c4?

As we will soon see, the merits of this knight manoeuvre are merely temporary. 21 f5 was preferable, when 21...d7 22 a1 xa1+ 23 xa1 leaves Black with somewhat less freedom than in the game, due to the pressure on d6.

21...d7!

A move with two functions: the bishop reaches its ideal square on g5, while the knight is directed to b6 in order to swap its colleague on c4. The tempting 21 f4 can wait until a more optimal moment. In fact, delaying obvious moves (such as 21 f4 in this case) is a useful idea in practical play, not only for reasons of tactics or strategy, but even psychology – here it is unpleasant for White to have to consider ...g6-f4 on virtually every move.

22 f1

If 22 c1, then 22...h6!, insisting on the idea of ...e7-g5.

22...b6 23 xb6 xb6

White’s proud knight is gone and now he has to take action against the threat of 24 a2.

24 a1 xa1 25 xa1 g5 26 b2 a5

The threat of 27 wa2 forces White to swap queens.

27 a6 xa6 28 xa6

28...d2!

Before seizing f4 with the knight, Black activates his bishop. The inefficiency of White’s bishop pair is striking.

29 g2 f4+

Another idea is 29...h5!? in order to separate the white g- and h-pawns, or fix a weakness on h3 by an opportune ...h5-h4. There can follow 30 f3 f4 31 f1 (or 31 h4 hxg4+ 32 xg4 g6 and the h-pawn has turned into a weakness) 31...g7 intending 32 g6 and 33...h4, when White is forced into a very passive position.

30 g3 g6

Thanks to his active pieces Black is con-
siderably better in this endgame, in fact only he can win. The game continued 31 h4 \(\text{f8} 32 \text{f3} \text{e7} 33 \text{c4} \text{f6} 34 \text{g5+} \text{g7} 35 \text{g4} \text{f6}! 36 \text{b5} \text{f7} 37 \text{c4} \text{g7} 38 \text{b5} \text{g2} 39 \text{gxf6+} \text{xf6} 40 \text{h5} \text{f4} 41 \text{hxg6} \text{h5+!} 42 \text{h4} \text{xg6} \text{and the passed h-pawn later proved decisive.}

For the related exercises to this section, see page 327.

**Dynamic exchanges**

So far we have seen a lot of exchanges supporting different objectives, without bothering too much on which particular square they took place. In contrast, this final section is devoted to exchanges that alter the pawn structure. Such “dynamic” exchanges can have the effect of clearing files and diagonals (see, for example, 17 \text{xe4} in Kramnik-Van Wely, p. 40; or 23 \text{xc5} in Petursson-Lyberg, p. 73) and creating weaknesses in the enemy camp. In the next few exercises we will have a look at the latter case.

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**Example 108**

**E.Bareev-M.Kobalia**

**Kazan 2005**

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Black is a little better thanks to his more harmoniously placed pieces. How can he convert this advantage into something more tangible? Kobalia finds a strong idea. 24...\text{h5!}

Deflecting the rook from f4, in order to weaken White’s pawn structure by a later ...\text{xf3}.

25 \text{e3}

After 25 \text{f5?!} \text{g6} the rook is in trouble, so Bareev prepares its escape to d4 instead.

25...\text{c7} 26 \text{d4} \text{xf3!} 27 \text{gxf3} \text{xd4} 28 \text{xd4} \text{f4}

The exchange on f3 left White with a number of weak pawns, while Black obtained a powerful protected square for his knight.

29 \text{f2} \text{c6}

Tempting, but the flexible 29...\text{e6}?! seems even stronger; for example, 30 \text{e3} \text{c2!} 31 a5 \text{b3 winning the b4-pawn, or} 30 \text{e5} \text{xb4!} 31 \text{xb4} \text{xe5} 32 \text{xb7} a5 with a slight advantage – Kobalia. The trade of dark-squared bishops is indeed beneficial for Black, since it makes his knight untouchable on f4.

30 b5!

Pawn exchanges tend to make life easier for the defender.

30...\text{axb5} 31 \text{axb5} \text{g6+}

After the exchange 31...\text{xf3?!} 32 \text{e3} \text{e3} 33 \text{exe3} \text{d6} (or 33...\text{e6}?! 34 \text{g2}) 34 \text{xf4!} \text{xf4} 35 \text{b6} the opposite-coloured bishop ending is an easy draw. In the game Black wins the pawn under better circumstances.

32 \text{h1} \text{h5!} 33 \text{we4} \text{xe3} 34 \text{g2} \text{g5} 35 \text{f5} \text{g6} 36 \text{g4!} \text{yg4+} 37 \text{fxg4} \text{e6}

Despite the minus pawn, White keeps reasonable drawing chances in this endgame thanks to the bishop pair. Nevertheless, Black won in the end.
White has just advanced the queen from c2 to e4, unpinning the knight on c3 and preparing to meet the reply 14...0-0? with the trick 15 \(\textit{Qxe6! Qxe6 16 Qxb4, while}\) 14...\(\textit{Qe7?! 15 Qd1 0-0 16 Qf4 leaves Black with a rather cramped position. Fortunately for Black, there is an excellent third option.}\) 14...\(\textit{Qxc3! 15 bxc3 0-0}\)

By giving up the bishop pair Black managed to quickly secure his king and, in a more long-term perspective, left the opponent with weaknesses on c3, c4 and a4. 16 \(\textit{Qd1?!}\)

This looks like an oversight, but Black is also better after 16 \(\textit{Qa3 Qe8 17 Qb4 Qac4 – Naiditsch.}\) 16...\(\textit{Qc6!}\)

By exploiting the pin along the d-file, Black swaps off the opponent’s “good” bishop, something that will further enhance his light square control. 17 \(\textit{Qg4 Qxg2 18 Qxg2 f5!}\)

Preparing a centralizing queen check to counteract White’s kingside threats. The immediate 18...\(\textit{Qd5+?}\) failed to 19 e4. 19 \(\textit{Qh5 Qd5+ 20 Qf3}\)

If 20 f3, then 20...\(\textit{Qac4}\) restricting the enemy bishop is a good reply. On the other hand, the careless 20...e5? runs into the response 21 \(\textit{Qxf5! Qxd1 22 Qe7+}\) with a perpetual check, and the same thing applies to 19...e5? on the previous move. 20...\(\textit{Rfe8 21 Qxd5 Qxd5}\)

The queen exchange finished off most of White’s activity, and now his queenside weaknesses have become more tangible.

22 \(\textit{Qb5}\)

After 22 \(\textit{Qb2 Qc4 23 Qab1 Qed8! 24 Qa1 b6}\) the bishop makes a sad impression. 22...\(\textit{Qc4 23 Qd4}\)

Or 23 \(\textit{Qxa7? Qc5!}\) trapping the knight.
23...a6 24 ∇a3 ∇xa3 25 ∇xa3 Bxc3 26 d6 Bc2

With a sound extra pawn, Black went on to win the game.

Sometimes the structural damage caused by the “dynamic” exchanges can be counter-weighed by other factors, as we will see next:

Example 110
G.Shahade-V.Akopian
New York Open 1998

In this double-edged position White has just played Wd2-d4, offering the exchange of queens. Now 18...Wxd4?! 19 cxd4 would evidently help him improve his pawn structure, while 18...Wf7?! permits 19 e5! dxe5 20 Wxe5 with an initiative. Akopian prefers a more active option.

18.c5!

Black accepts a shattered pawn structure on the kingside in order to keep up the pressure on the other flank.

19 Wxf6

After 19 Wxd6 Axd8 20 e5! Wxd6! 21 exf6 Axc4 Black emerges with a similar advantage as in the game.

19...gxf6 20 Wfd1 Ab2!

A clever way of picking up the c4-pawn. Less good is 20...Wxc4?! 21 Wxd6 or 20...Wfd8?! 21 Aa5! b6 22 Axc6 intending 22...Ad7? 23 e5! – Ribli.

21 Wxd6 Oc4 22 Ad3 b6

Black has managed to stabilize the position with a slight edge thanks to his queenside grip. On the other flank his weaknesses are not easily exploited by White, who has a problem with his passive knight on b3.

23 e5

Trying to create some activity. 23 Acd1? failed to 23...Ab2, while 23 f5 Ae5! and 23 Ad2 Wfd8! both also favoured Black.

23...Ad8!

Seizing the open file. The pawn that is now lost on f6 can be collected later.

24 Wxd8

After 24 Acd1? Wxd3 25 Wxd3 fxe5 White is just a pawn down.

24...Wxd8 25 Wxf6 Ae3 26 Wf3

Parrying the threat of 26...Axd1+ 27 Wxd1 Axd1, when the white queenside soon collapses.

26...Ag4!

27 Axc4?

As we will see soon, the bishop’s departure will leave White seriously weakened on the light squares. 27 Axd1 was correct,
swapping the active enemy rook; e.g. 27...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xd1+ 28 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xd1 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xf6 29 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}f3} with just a slight disadvantage due to the isolated queenside pawns. At this point, the tempting 29...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d5? fails to 30 f5l.}}

27...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xg4 28 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}c2 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d3}}!}

Tying the white rook to the c3-pawn. The immediate 28...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}h7? was less precise due to 29 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d2!}, neutralizing Black’s strong rook.

29 c4?!

Fixing the pawn on a light square can’t be right, but after 29 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d2? \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d1} or 29 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}f2 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}h7} 30 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}c1 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d1} White also remains in difficulties.

29...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}h7 30 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}c1 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d1+ 31 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}f2 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}g6}}}}

![Diagram]

Black is finally ready to restore the material balance. In this kind of minor piece ending, with pawns on both flanks and rooks on the board, the bishop clearly outshines the knight.

32 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}e2 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}f5!}}

Akopian directs his attention to the c4-pawn. Less technical is 32...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xf6?! 33 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}c3} with some slight counterplay.

33 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}b2}

If the rook leaves the second rank, then 33...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d2 decides.

33...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d3 34 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}c3 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}f1+ 35 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}g2 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xc4}}}}

Black wins a pawn and, more importantly, generates powerful connected passed pawns.

36 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d5 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}c1 37 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}e7+ \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xf6 38 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}c8 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}a1!}}}}}

Forcing favourable simplifications.

39 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xa7 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xa2 40 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xa2 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xa2 41 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}f2 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}e6 42 f5+ \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}e5!}}}}}}

Avoiding 42...\texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xf5? 43 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}c8 b5 44 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}d6+ \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}e5 45 \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xb5 with some remote drawing chances. After the text White is unable to stop the passed pawns, so he resigned.}}}}

Just as a “dynamic” exchange can damage a sound pawn structure, it can also repair a defective one. In the following example Black used this idea on several occasions.

Example 111
L.Van Wely-V.Salov
Wijk aan Zee 1997

![Diagram]

An English Opening with an early \texttt{\textit{\textbackslash}xc6 produced this clash between different advantages. White possesses a compact pawn structure, but the absence of the fianchettoed bishop has left him vulnerable on the light squares and, indirectly, to a kingside attack. Black, on the other hand, enjoys the bishop pair in return for his numerous queenside weaknesses. An interesting bat-
tle is to be expected.

13...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}d5!}}

Salov exploits the dynamic potential of his doubled pawns in order to centralize the knight. This is similar to Shahade's \texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}d2-d4}} in the previous example. Also interesting is 13...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e6l}?}} intending ...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}c7}} and ...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}5-f4}} (Yudasin), when White could consider 14 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}4}} in order to counter 14...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}7}} with the annoying 15 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}5l}}.

14 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}1}}

Obviously 14 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}xd5? cxd5}} does Black a big favour by repairing his pawn structure.

\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d8}}}

The possession of a semi-open file is another asset produced by doubled pawns.

15 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}2}}

Before attacking the \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}5}}-pawn White mobilizes all his pieces. The straightforward 15 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}4l?!}} is less appropriate due to 15...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}xe3}} 16 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}xe3 f5l}}, followed by ...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}5-f4}}, with a strong attack.

15...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}6l}}

A clever prophylactic move that prepares to meet 16 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}4}} by 16...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}6l}}, offering a new “dynamic” exchange. Then 17 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}5?}} would fail to 17...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}4}}, winning a piece. This tactical line explains White’s next move in the game.

16 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}3l \textit{\textbf{e}xe3}}}

Swapping the bishop before White goes \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}3-a4}}.

17 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xe}3}}

17...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}4l!}}

In the same spirit as the 13th move. Generally in such a structure White is happy to swap queens, but not on \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}4}} where the recapture \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}5xd4}} would straighten out Black’s pawns. Thus Van Wely ignores the active enemy queen and continues his queenside attack.

18 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}4 a4l \textit{\textbf{d}5 19 \textit{\textbf{ed}1}}}}

If 19 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}2}}, hitting \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}5}}, then 19...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}5}} preparing ...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}5-f4}}; for example, 20 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}4 f5l 21 \textit{\textbf{xc}5 \textit{\textbf{xe}3 22 fxe3 \textit{\textbf{g}5l 23 \textit{\textbf{f}2}} f4}} with strong counterplay.

19...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{fd}8 20 \textit{\textbf{c}4}}}

Preparing \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}c1}} with increased pressure on the \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}5}}-pawn. With the white knight still on \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}4}} Black can’t play ...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}6-f5}}, so how can he create some activity?

20...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}5l}}

A key move. With most enemy pieces concentrated to the queenside, Salov opens a new front on the other flank.

21 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{dc1}}}

After 21 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}4l \textit{\textbf{g}4l 22 \textit{\textbf{h}2 \textit{\textbf{e}6}}}} the white king is in danger.

21...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}4 22 \textit{\textbf{d}2 \textit{\textbf{b}5 23 \textit{\textbf{f}3l}}}}}

Accurate defence. After 23 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}5l \textit{\textbf{xc}5}}}

132
24 \textit{\textit{\text{\textx{xc}c}}5} \textit{\textit{\text{\textx{xc}c}}5} 25 \textit{\textit{\text{\textx{xc}c}}5} \textit{\textit{\textw{a}1+}} 26 \textit{\textit{\textdf{f}1}} \textit{\textit{\textw{xa}2}}, preparing \ldots \textit{\textit{\text{\textb{b}8}}, White’s king would feel uncomfortable.}

\textbf{23...\textit{\textw{xe}3}} 24 \textit{\textit{\text{\textf{f}e}3}}

Now Black is forced to create some activity before White goes e3-e4.

\textbf{24...\textit{\text{\textx{hx}g}3}} 25 \textit{\textit{\text{\textx{hx}g}3}} e4! 26 \textit{\text{\textd{xe}4}}

If 26 \textit{\textit{\textdf{d}2}} exd3 27 exd3, then 27...f5! 28 \textit{\textit{\text{\textx{xc}c}}5} \textit{\textit{\text{\textf{f}6}}, preparing \ldots \textit{\textit{\textw{f}7}} and \ldots \textit{\textit{\texth{h}8} with counterplay – Ribli.}

\textbf{26...\textit{\textd{xe}4}} 27 \textit{\textit{\text{\textx{xc}c}}5} \textit{\textit{\textxf{f}3}} 28 \textit{\text{\texte{xf}3}} \textit{\textit{\textd{d}2!}}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

Black is a pawn down, but his active pieces provide ample compensation.

\textbf{29 \textit{\texta{a}4}} \textit{\textit{\textb{b}8}} 30 \textit{\textit{\textd{d}3}}

30 \textit{\textit{\text{\textc{c}2}} just invites to mass exchanges and a draw, while 30 \textit{\textit{\textb{b}1}!}, safeguarding the b3-pawn, is well met by 30...\textit{\textit{\text{\textb{d}d}8}} 31 \textit{\textit{\texte{e}4}} \textit{\textit{\texte{e}2}, when both 32 \textit{\textit{\textx{xc}c}6 f5! followed by 33...\textit{\textit{\text{\textd{d}d}d2}} and 32 g4 \textit{\textit{\textb{b}4}! 33 \textit{\textit{\textc{c}4 a5}} lead to black counterplay.}

\textbf{30...\textit{\texta{a}3!}}

Heading for b2 in order to soften up White’s defence.

\textbf{31 \textit{\textb{b}1}} \textit{\textit{\textd{d}8}} 32 \textit{\textit{\textf{f}2}} c5 33 \textit{\textit{\textf{f}1}?}

This lets Black stretch his initiative to a maximum. White should have simplified by 33 \textit{\textit{\texte{e}4!}} \textit{\textit{\texte}2} 34 \textit{\textit{\text{\textx{xc}c}5 \textit{\textit{\textx{xc}c}5 \textit{\textit{\textc{c}5 \textit{\textit{\textd{d}d}d2}} 36 e4 and the game ends with a perpetual – Ribli.}

\textbf{33...\textit{\texta{a}2}} 34 \textit{\textit{\textd{d}3}} \textit{\textit{\textb{b}4}! 35 \textit{\textit{\textb{xb}4 cxb4} 36 \textit{\textit{\textc{c}4 \textit{\textit{\textd{d}d}d2}}}

Despite the pawn minus, Black is not interested in a draw but aims at eliminating White’s kingside. The game continued 37 \textit{\textit{\text{\textxb}b4 \textit{\textit{\textf{f}2+}} 38 \textit{\textit{\textg{g}1 \textit{\textit{\textxf}f3 39 g4 \textit{\textit{\textxe}e3 40 \textit{\textf{f}1 a5! and White soon lost another pawn, and eventually the game.}

For the related exercises, see page 328.
Chapter Four

Pawn Play

The play with pawns fulfils a whole range of functions in chess. In the previous chapters we came across some of them, such as the opening of files (Garcia Palermo-Bibiloni), clearance of diagonals (Sokolov-Nedev), and creation of protected squares (Vyzmanavin-Braga). Moreover, in examples like Guliev-Timman we observed that a single pawn move can cause serious weaknesses in one's own camp. In this chapter we will examine further facets of pawn play.

Gaining space
A fundamental function of pawn play is to gain space. We have already seen some examples of this in the previous chapters; e.g. Seirawan-Sosonko (the g4-g5 advance) and Stahlberg-Taimanov (the ...b5-b4 advance). By moving our pawns forward we are able to control more squares, and the space vacated by them often proves useful to the other pieces. In the following games we will see White gaining space on the three main areas of the board: the kingside, the queenside and the centre. These examples will also tell us something about how to exploit a space advantage once it is achieved.

Example 112
A.Karpov-S.Gligoric
San Antonio 1972

In a typical Spanish battle Black has just played ...c7-c5, challenging the white centre. Karpov now initiates some alterations to the pawn structure that will help him to gain space.

25 bxc5 dxc5 26 d5! avaş
Improving the knight and preparing 27...c4, followed by 28...\texttt{\texttt{xc5}}, with a favourable bishop exchange. However, after seeing the game, one gets the feeling that Black should rather have taken some measures on the other flank. One try in this sense would be 26...g6 preparing ...\texttt{g7}, although after 27 c4! b4 28 \texttt{b3}, with ideas like \texttt{a5} and a2-a3, White keeps the initiative.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\multicolumn{8}{|c|}{\texttt{30 \texttt{wc2 \texttt{c3 31 f5!}}}\texttt{}} \\
\multicolumn{8}{|c|}{A key move. Karpov avoids the plan of} \\
\multicolumn{8}{|c|}{...e5xf4 followed by ...\texttt{e5}, and gains} \\
\multicolumn{8}{|c|}{considerable space on the kingside.} \\
\multicolumn{8}{|c|}{{\texttt{31...\texttt{f6 32 \texttt{e2}}}}} \\
\multicolumn{8}{|c|}{Swapping the opponent's most active} \\
\multicolumn{8}{|c|}{piece and clearing the way for the g-pawn.} \\
\multicolumn{8}{|c|}{{\texttt{32...\texttt{xex2+ 33 \texttt{xex2 \texttt{d6}}}}} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

27 c4!

Preventing Black's plan and strengthening the centre.

27...b4 28 \texttt{f1!}

Now that the tension has dissolved in the centre, White can start concrete action on the kingside. The protected square on c3 is less relevant.

28...\texttt{w7}

Unfortunately, there is no longer time for 28...g6?! 29 f4 exf4 30 \texttt{xf4 \texttt{g7}} due to 31 e5 with a huge edge.

29 f4 \texttt{d7}

Again strategy and tactics don't match for Black: the desirable 29...exf4?! 30 \texttt{xf4 \texttt{d6}} fails to 31 \texttt{xd6 \texttt{xd6}} 32 \texttt{f5} with a strong initiative; e.g. 32...\texttt{e5? 33 \texttt{f3} or} \\
32...\texttt{d8 33 \texttt{a1! \texttt{c3 34 \texttt{xc3 bxc3 35 \texttt{xc3}, threatening 36 \texttt{xh6+ as well as 36 \texttt{e5.}}}}}

34 g4!

Of course. With the centre completely closed, nothing speaks against a massive pawn advance on the kingside.

34...\texttt{f8!}

A clever defence. The king escapes from potential dangers on the kingside, just like in Zherebukh-Salem (p. 83).

35 h4 \texttt{e7 36 g5 hgx5 37 hxg5 \texttt{d7 38 \texttt{g4!}}} \\
A typical theme when gaining space: the squares vacated by the advancing pawn are of immediate interest to its fellow pieces. In fact we already saw this happen in Hellsten-Berrocal with 32 \texttt{d5} (p. 91). From now on Black will have to be on his guard against an opportune f5-f6, and this explains his next move.

38...\texttt{g8 39 \texttt{f2}}

Preparing \texttt{h1} in order to dispute the open file.

39...\texttt{h8}
Now that the white king obstructs the rook along the f-file, Black doesn't have to fear 40 f6+.

40 \textit{c}h1 \textit{c}g8 41 \textit{w}d1

White takes his time, aware that the opponent has no counterplay at all. Another strong option was 41 a3! a5 42 \textit{a}4 \textit{b}6 43 \textit{w}b5, opening a second front on the queenside – Karpov.

41...\textit{d}8 42 \textit{w}g1 \textit{b}6 43 \textit{h}2 \textit{e}7

Preparing to meet 44 \textit{w}h1 by 44...\textit{f}8, resisting on the h-file. However, this move also reduces Black's queenside control, something that Karpov immediately exploits.

44 \textit{b}3! \textit{c}7 45 \textit{f}3!

Clearing the second rank for the major pieces and producing an attack on the c5-pawn.

45...\textit{d}7

\textbf{Example 113}

\textit{G.Kasparov-S.Martinovic}

\textit{Baku 1980}

46 a3!

A typical method in positions with a space advantage – open a second front. Now Black is too cramped to be able to defend both flanks at the same time.

46...\textit{b}xa3 47 \textit{a}2 \textit{h}4 48 \textit{a}xa3 \textit{g}h8 49 \textit{b}1 \textit{b}8

49...\textit{h}1 50 \textit{x}h1 \textit{x}h1 51 \textit{x}h1 is equally hopeless.

50 \textit{w}e1!

14 \textit{b}4!

Gaining some space and taking the c5-square from the black knight.

14...\textit{a}6

The active 14...\textit{a}5!? would have complicated White's plan; e.g. 15 a3 \textit{a}7 16 \textit{d}3
ea8 17 b2 with just a slight edge – Kasparov.

15 c4 ac8?!

Aware that the immediate 15...c5? runs into 16 ad1 cxb4 17 d6, Black prepares it. However, 15...e6! was a better way of doing that; for example, 16 a4 a5! with counterplay, or 16 fd2 c5 17 e3 cxb4 18 cxb4 ac8 19 wb1 b5 20 a4 and again White has just a slight advantage – Kasparov.

16 a4!

From now on White is ready to meet ...c7-c5 by b4-b5, thus securing the knight on c4 as well as the weak pawn on b6.

16...e6 17 fd2 h5

Deprived of any prospects on the queenside, Martinovic directs his attention to the other flank.

18 f3 f6 19 f2!

Keeping the “good” bishop.

19...g5 20 e3

Vacating the c4-square, but not for the bishop!

20...df6

contrast, after 21 c4?! e7 it is not clear what White has achieved.

21...c6?!

Preventing 22 d5 at the cost of severely weakening the dark squares on the queenside, something that Kasparov immediately exploits. Instead, something like 21 cd8 22 d5 ad7 was preferable, when 23 a5 preserves White’s advantage.

22 b3! d7 23 c5!

Softening up Black’s queenside and creating a protected square on d6.

23...b5

Equally bad is 23...xc5 24 bxc5! with the knight entering on a5.

24 ed1 e7 25 c4!

By using some minor tactics White seizes the d6-square. Also strong was 25 f5! in the same spirit – Kasparov.

25...c7

After 25...bxc4? 26 xc4 the piece is recovered with interest.

26 d6 b8 27 axb5 cxb5

Now White is left with a strong passed pawn, but 27...xb5 28 a7 followed by 29 a5 was fatal.

28 xb7 bxb7 29 a2!

By attacking the a6-pawn Kasparov forces a queen exchange, which will help him realizing the c-pawn.
29...\textit{b}8 30 \textit{a}5 \textit{wxa}2 31 \textit{xa}2 \textit{a}7 32 \textit{c}6 \textit{a}8

Curiously, the rook has been forced all the way back home, and so has the knight. The game concluded 33 \textit{c}2! \textit{xb}4 34 \textit{d}8+ \textit{g}7 35 \textit{b}6 \textit{xa}5 36 \textit{xa}5 \textit{xc}6 37 \textit{xb}8 \textit{xb}8 38 \textit{xc}6 \textit{b}4 39 \textit{c}7 and Black resigned.

\textbf{Example 114}

L.Johannessen-H.Nakamura

Bermuda 2002

\textbf{18 e}5!

A pawn centre on the fifth rank tends to be a devastating force in most positions, and this is no exception.

\textbf{18...\textit{a}e}8

Preparing ...f7-f6 to create at least some counterplay.

\textbf{19 \textit{fd}1 \textit{f}6 20 \textit{e}3!}

There was no reason to help Black by 20 exf6?! exf6.

16 \textit{d}5!

Gaining space and preventing 16...\textit{c}6. Less convincing is 16 e5?! \textit{c}6 17 \textit{wa}4 \textit{ad}8 and Black has no problems whatsoever.

\textbf{16...\textit{a}6}

Here, or on the next move, a blockade with 16...\textit{e}5 made little sense due to 17 \textit{g}4!, preparing f2-f4 – Krasenkow, who instead suggests 16...\textit{a}5, running with the a-pawn as far as possible.

\textbf{17 \textit{we}2}

\textit{20...\textit{c}8}

Or 20...\textit{b}6 21 \textit{xc}5 \textit{bxc}5 22 \textit{w}c4! \textit{fxe}5 23 \textit{d}6+ \textit{h}8 24 \textit{b}7, followed by 25 dx\textit{e}7, with a decisive advantage.
21 d6!

Another key move which clears the h1-a8 and a2-g8 diagonals for tactical purposes, while getting White one step closer to a passed pawn.

21...b6

Neither 21...exd6 22 a2+! h8 23 xa7, with the double threat of 24 xc5 and 24 exd6, nor 21...fxe5 22 xc5 xc5 23 a2+ h8 24 xa7 c4 25 xb7 offered Black any chance of resistance – Krasenkow.

22 xc5!

White finally says goodbye to his bishop pair, in order to secure the further advance of his central pawns.

22...xc5 23 e6

In less than ten moves White’s pawn centre has made remarkable progress, and he is now ready to convert it into a decisive passed pawn.

23 w8

After 23 w d8 24 dxe7 wxe7 25 d7 w8 26 xa7 e5 27 c4, with ideas like w7 and d5, the situation is desperate for Black.

24 dxe7

Not 24 d7?! w7 with some remote hope of salvation.

24...w8 25 d8!

The final touch. One of the passed pawns sacrifices itself in order to secure the advance of its colleague.

25...xd8 26 exd8 w+ xd8 27 e7 w e8 28 w e6+ h8 29 d1! c8 30 xc8! xc8 31 d8+

Black resigned.

A common situation for a pawn expansion is when the opponent’s king is being attacked. Let’s see one example.

Example 115

M. Adams-O. Renet
Cannes (team rapid) 1992

In the opening Black was forced to define the destiny of his king much earlier than desired, and White can proceed with a full-scale attack.

12 f5!

The kingside pawns start rolling. 12 g4 was somewhat less precise due to 12...e5!, hitting the g4-pawn. Here both 13 g5 exd4 14 gxf6 dxc3 15 fxg7 cxb2+ 16 b1 and 13 d5!? gxf5 14 gxf5 yield White promising play, but in the game he will have even better prospects.

12...c6 13 g4! e8

Reinforcing the e6-pawn and vacating

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the f8-square for the bishop. 13...dxe5! 14 \( \text{g2} c4 \) is too optimistic in view of 15 \( \text{x}c4 \) \( \text{x}c4 \) 16 g5 d5 17 f6 h8 18 de2, followed by g3, when Black's kingside is soon unlocked with decisive effect. But 13...exf5? 14 exf5 dxe4 15 dx4 d7 followed by 16...c6 might have been a lesser evil, with a difficult though not yet lost game.

14 g5 d7

Or 14...h5 15 f6 f8 16 g2, followed by xh5, and White breaks through.

15 f6 f8 16 h4!

Of course. White intends simply to open the h-file and give mate.

16...de5 17 w3 b5 18 h5

Even swifter was 18 xc6!, deflecting one of the black defenders before carrying on with the attack. Now both 18...xc6 19 h5 and 18...xc6 19 h5 b4 20 df1l, preparing 21 hxg6 hxg6 22 f7+, lead to an immediate win.

18...b4 19 axb4 xb4 20 df1!

Installing the threat of 21 hxg6 hxg6 22 f7+. Black has just one reply.

20...h6 21 f3!

In order to swap the defender on e5.

21...d8

This counterattack won't turn out well, but after 21...bc6 22 hxg6 fxg6 23 gxh6 White's win is just a question of time.

22 dxe5 dxe5 23 hxg6 fxg6 24 f7+ h7

Or 24...h8 25 f6l \( \text{a5} \) 26 b1 xc2 27 xg6 a3+ 28 c1 and wins – Adams.

25 h5!

Forcing the black king to leave his cave.

25...a5

After 25...gxh5 26 g6+ h8 27 xhx5 \( \text{a5} \) 28 b1 xc2 29 xhx6 Black is mated.

26 xg6+ h8 27 b1 xc2 28 f3!

28 xc2 was also possible, but the text forces mate.

28...a3+ 29 c1

In view of 29...c4 30 f6+ g7 31 xhx6 mate, Black resigned.

An important idea when possessing a space advantage is the opening of a second front. This is similar to the famous endgame principle of "two weaknesses", just that there are more pieces on the board. Typically the new front is opened by a pawn, like Karpov's 46 a3! against Gligoric (p. 134). Here is one more example.

Example 116

V.Kuporosov-A.Panchenko
Budapest 1991

White is much better, thanks to his
space advantage, control of the only open file and the strong bishop on d6. However, a mechanical doubling of rooks by d3 and ed1 might not yield much after a7-d7 followed by ed8. Kuporosov finds a stronger option.

$$\text{25 h4!}$$

Opening up a second front on the kingside, where Black can't defend himself easily due to the lack of space.

$$\text{25...a7}$$

The desirable 25...h5? runs into 26 g4 hxg4 27 xg4 followed by 28 h5, when it is hard to believe that the attack can be stopped.

$$\text{26 h5 d7 27 d3 a8 28 f4!}$$

Keeping the queens for a future attack and enabling the next, strong move.

$$\text{28 d8 h6!}$$

At first sight it seems illogical to close the h-file, thus ruling out a direct attack. However, Kuporosov has estimated that from now on Black will have a problem with his bishop, whereas the h6-pawn will be useful in any tactical context.

$$\text{29 h8}$$

The desirable 29...f8 fails to 30 ed1 xd6 31 xd6 xd6 32 xd6, when Black can't keep both b6 and f6 under control.

$$\text{30 e4 a8 31 e3}$$

Slowly resuming work on the second front.

$$\text{31 d8?!}$$

Here or later, Black should have tried to free himself by f7-f6. On this occasion, after 31 f6 32 exf6 xf6 33 e5 White obtains a comfortable edge, but Black has more hopes of survival than in the game.

$$\text{32 g3 a8 33 d1 c6 34 f4 a8 35 1d2 c6 36 d1 a8 37 h2 a7 38 g4! d7 39 g3 a7 40 h3 c8 41 e4 b7?!}$$

As we will see next, the queen exchange no longer favours Black. But White should also be winning after 41 d7 42 g2, preparing 43 f5.

$$\text{42 xb7! xb7}$$

$$\text{43 f5!}$$

Threatening f5-f6 followed by e7, when the entrance of the white rooks is inevitable.

$$\text{43 f6}$$

After 43 exf5 44 gxf5, both 44...gxf5? 45 d3+ and 44...xe5? 45 xe5 xe5 46 d8+ lose for Black, while 44...f6 45 e6 is equally grim for him.

$$\text{44 g5!}$$

A nice blow. No matter how Black captures, a white pawn reaches f6 on the next move.

$$\text{44...xe5 45 f6 e4 46 3d2}$$
White finally managed to unlock the position and the rest is just agony for Black due to his sad bishop.

46...e3 47 e2 d7 48 xex3 e5 49 d5 ed8 50 c7l xd5 51 cxd5 xd5 52 xex5

In this hopeless position, Black resigned.

For the related exercises, see page 329.

Creating weaknesses
Another important idea within pawn play is to create weaknesses. Here I am referring to pawn advances that soften up squares or pawns in the enemy camp. Let’s start by examining a few examples where the focus lies on potentially weak squares.

Example 117
V.Ivanchuk-P.Leko
Istanbul Olympiad 2000

White is better, thanks to control of the open file and the pressure on the black pawns on the sixth. However, an immediate assault with 30 f4? backfires after 30...e5! 31 dxex5 fxe5. Ivanchuk finds a more controlled way to proceed.

30...f8

Leko overprotects his weaknesses at g6 and e6, and prepares 31...c8 in order to swap the active white rook.

31 f4

By attacking the knight on d6 White prevents ...e8-c8. In contrast, after 31 h5?! c8! 32 xxc8 xc8 33 f4 f7! Black defends comfortably.

31...d8

In the event of 31...f7?! both 32 xb8 xb8 33 c7! and the immediate 32 c7! get White in command of the seventh rank.

32 g4!

With the simple idea of g4-g5 in order to soften up the key square on e5.

32...e8

Searching for some relief in a queen exchange. It is hard to suggest anything better, e.g. 32...h6?! 33 g5.

33 xb8 xb8

Now the black knights cover the key squares on c7, e6 and f6, while b6 is defended by the rook. If Leko had the time, he would free himself by ...f7-e7, ...d6, ...d7 and finally ...c8. But this whole idea remains an illusion after White’s next move.

34 g5!

Generating a weak square on e5, to the great pleasure of the white knight.

34...h6 35 g2!

There was nothing wrong with the immediate 35 gxf6+ xf6 36 e5, but Ivanchuk has observed that his opponent can’t undertake anything anyway, thus he first activates his king.

35 hxg5 hxg5 36 f7 37 gxf6 xf6 38 e5 b7

This drops a pawn; but after 38...g5 39 g3, intending g4, f3 and xg5, the win is just a question of time.

39 c8! e7
Even worse is 39...e7? 40 b5, losing one of the knights.

40 xg6 d6 41 c6

On top of his positional superiority, White now has an extra pawn. Ivanchuk won without difficulty.

Example 118
B.Spassky-M.Taimanov
USSR Championship, Moscow 1956

In a Spanish battle Spassky has just played a2-a4, which is a typical move in this opening. However, on this occasion it lets Black carry out a favourable alteration of the pawn structure.

11 dxc3! 12 bxc3 b4!

A strong pawn advance with the aim of softening up the d4-square for the black pieces.

13 c4

Now each side has “his” weakness, but as the further course of the game will show us, the central ones are usually worth more. In the event of 13 b2 Black could consider 13 e8?! , overprotecting e5; e.g. 14 c4 g4! 15 h3 xf3 16 xf3 bxc3 17 xc3 c5!, followed by d4 with a pleasant advantage.

13 g4!

Enabling a timely ...xf3 to eliminate a defender of the d4-square. Less convincing is 13...bxc3?! 14 cxe5 with complications.

14 b2 c5 15 ad1

After 15 cb4 xf3 16 xf3 xb4 17 ac1 d4! the d4-square also remains in Black’s command.

15 bxc3 16 xc3 d4

Another good option was 16 d4; for example, 17 d2 h5! preparing 18...f4. Here 18 h3? fails to 18...g3.

17 xd4 xd4 18 h3 xf3 19 xf3 d7!

Time to improve the knight, which is in fact the most suitable occupant of the d4-square.

20 b1 wg5!

Activating the queen and connecting the rooks.

21 h1 g6 22 e3 c5 23 c4

White can’t really undertake much, e.g. 23 d5?! c6.

23 g7!

Taimanov keeps slowly improving his position. The game continued 24 e2 e6 25 g3 c5! 26 xb8 xb8 27 h2 f6 28 g2 h5 29 h4 d4 30 d1 e6 with a clear advantage for Black, who went on to win the game.
Intending 19...\(\text{Qf4}\) followed by ...\(\text{Qd7-e5}\) with complete dark square control, but White will not let this happen. Preferable was 18...\(h5\) 19 h4 gxh4 20 g3xh4 \(\text{Qg6}\), as in the game Joe. Benjamin-J. Watson, Lone Pine 1979, when 21 \(\text{Qg5}\)? looks a little better for White.

19 \(\text{Qec4}\) \(\text{Qf4}\) 20 \(\text{Qxf4!}\)

Initiating powerful action in the centre.

20...\(\text{gxf4}\) 21 \(\text{e5!}\) dxe5 22 \(\text{Qf3}\)

Thanks to threat of \(23\ \text{d6}\), White recovers the pawn at once.

22...\(\text{Wf8}\) 23 \(\text{Qxe5}\) \(\text{Qb7}\)

Here is a more complex example. In a typical Benoni, the ...\(g6-g5\) advance helped Black to gain some space and enhance his dark square control, but also left a weakness on \(f5\). However, the straightforward \(16\ \text{Qd1}\), heading for \(e3-f5\), is well met by \(16...\text{Qe5}\) 17 \(\text{Qe3}\) \(\text{Qd7}\) and Black has everything under control; e.g. 18 f4 gxf4 19 \(\text{Qxf4}\) \(\text{Qg6}\) 20 \(\text{Qf5}\) \(\text{Qxf5}\) 21 \(\text{Qxf5}\) \(c4!\) with counterplay. Thus White needs to widen his horizons.

16 \(\text{a4!}\)

Softening up \(c4\) for the white knights.

16...\(b4\)

After 16...\(\text{bxa4}\)? 17 \(\text{Qc4!}\) \(\text{Qe5}\) 18 \(\text{Qxe5!}\) dxe5 19 \(\text{Qxa4}\) White manages to ruin the black pawn structure while keeping the knight on \(c4\), with a clear advantage on the whole board.

17 \(\text{Qd1}\) \(\text{Qe5}\)

The brave 17...\(\text{Qxe4?!}\) is well met by 18 \(\text{Qd3}\) \(f5\) 19 \(\text{Qxe4}\) (not 19 \(f3?\) \(\text{Qd4+}\)) 19...\(\text{fxe4}\) 20 \(\text{Qxe4}\) \(\text{Qe5}\) 21 \(\text{Qe3}\), perhaps followed by 22 \(f4\), with a strong initiative.

18 \(\text{Qe3}\) \(\text{Qg6?!}\)

Black's pawn structure is now in ruins, but his bishop pair yields some kind of compensation.

24 \(\text{Qdc4!}\)

Najdorf concludes the plan initiated by 16 \(\text{a4}\), without worrying about the \(d5\)-pawn.

24...\(\text{Qad8}\)

Indeed, after 24...\(\text{Qxd5}\)? 25 \(\text{Qd7!}\) or 24...\(\text{Qxd5}\)? 25 \(\text{Qxd5}\) \(\text{Qxd5}\) 26 \(\text{Qd7!}\) White wins material.

25 \(\text{Qc6!}\)

The tempting 25 \(d6?!\) permits 25...\(\text{Qxf3}\) 26 \(\text{Qxf3}\) \(\text{Qxe1}\) 27 \(\text{Qxe1}\) \(\text{Qe8!}\), eliminating the passed pawn. In the game White waits with its advance until a better opportunity arises.
25...\textit{\texttt{hx}e1} 26 \textit{\texttt{hx}e1} \textit{\texttt{he}}8 27 \textit{\texttt{ad}1}!

Another precise move, which leaves Black's major pieces badly placed and supports the passed pawn.

27...\textit{\texttt{hc}c8} 28 \textit{\texttt{h}3}?!?

Aware that the opponent can't undertake much, Najdorf opts for a useful move.

28...\textit{\texttt{de}8}

After 28...\textit{\texttt{xd}xd5} 29 \textit{\texttt{d}6a5} White wins.

29 \textit{\texttt{d}6a5} \textit{\texttt{bb}8}

Or 29...\textit{\texttt{a}a8} 30 \textit{\texttt{bb}6} \textit{\texttt{ad}8} 31 \textit{\texttt{xa}xa8} \textit{\texttt{xa}xa8} 32 \textit{\texttt{d}6}! \textit{\texttt{ad}8} 33 \textit{\texttt{d}7} \textit{\texttt{af}6} 34 \textit{\texttt{c}c}6 and the passed pawn decides.

30 \textit{\texttt{wf}5}!


\begin{center}

\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node at (0,0) {  \textbullet
  \begin{tikzpicture}
    \tikzstyle{black}=[fill=black!80,inner sep=0pt,minimum size=20pt]
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      \node at (0,0) {\textbullet};
      \end{tikzpicture}
  \end{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

15 \textit{\texttt{h}4}!

A typical advance to gain some space and enable future pressure on Black's kingside. Since the reply 15...\textit{\texttt{h}5} isn't possible, the pawn can soon move on to \textit{\texttt{h}5}.

15...\textit{\texttt{a}6}?!?

Any bishop or knight move to \textit{\texttt{f}5} drops the \textit{\texttt{d}5} pawn, and so does 15...\textit{\texttt{g}6}?! after 16 \textit{\texttt{a}3}! \textit{\texttt{a}a5} 17 \textit{\texttt{xd}xd5}. With 15...\textit{\texttt{a}6} Plachetka, instead, prepares a bishop exchange with a timely ...\textit{\texttt{b}b}5, but this doesn't have a high priority at this moment. The immediate 15...\textit{\texttt{xc}xc1} 16 \textit{\texttt{xc}xc1} \textit{\texttt{c}c}8 was better, in order to simplify the game.

16 \textit{\texttt{h}5} \textit{\texttt{xc}1}

Now if 16...\textit{\texttt{b}b}5, then 17 \textit{\texttt{xb}xb5} \textit{\texttt{xb}5} 18 \textit{\texttt{d}d}3 \textit{\texttt{a}a5} 19 \textit{\texttt{c}c}5! with an initiative. Also after 16...\textit{\texttt{h}6}?! 17 \textit{\texttt{b}b}1, preparing \textit{\texttt{d}d}3, White is slightly better thanks to his control of the \textit{\texttt{b}1-\texttt{h}7} diagonal, which can't be blocked by ...\textit{\texttt{g}7-\texttt{g}6} anymore.

17 \textit{\texttt{xc}xc1} \textit{\texttt{c}c8} 18 \textit{\texttt{xc}xc8}+ \textit{\texttt{xc}xc8} 19 \textit{\texttt{c}c}2!

A small but useful move. The bishop can now go to \textit{\texttt{b}3} to put pressure on \textit{\texttt{d}5}, while a subsequent \textit{\texttt{d}d}3 will help both the knight and the other bishop in finding new destinies.
19...\textit{d}7?

Black prepares 20...\textit{c}6 in order to safeguard the d5-pawn, but the following sequence of white moves will leave him suffering on the kingside. Preferable was 19...h6 20 \textit{b}3 \textit{e}6 with a passive but safe position. A future white plan might be \textit{x}e6, \textit{c}2 and \textit{e}2-d3 with pressure along the b1-h7 diagonal.

20 \textit{b}3 \textit{c}6 21 \textit{d}3 \textit{a}5 22 \textit{e}5! \textit{e}8

After 22...\textit{e}6 23 \textit{x}c6, both 23...\textit{b}xc6 24 \textit{e}2 and 23...\textit{w}xc6 24 h6!, intending 24...g6 25 \textit{g}5, lead to a clear advantage for White.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_diagram.png}
\end{center}

23 h6!

A key move that softens up a whole complex of dark squares. Now it is evident why Black should have preferred ...h7-h6 earlier.

23...g6 24 \textit{g}4!

By means of the threat 25 \textit{f}6+, White forces ...f7-f5 in order to secure the e5-square. Another good option was 24 \textit{g}5, increasing the pressure on the d5-pawn; e.g. 24...\textit{f}5 25 \textit{x}d5 \textit{w}xd5 26 \textit{d}5 \textit{d}4 27 \textit{x}b7 with a sound extra pawn in the endgame.

24...f5 25 \textit{e}5 \textit{c}6 26 \textit{d}3!

A temporary retreat that clears the way for the bishop towards e5, where it will haunt the black king.

26...\textit{f}8 27 \textit{f}4 \textit{f}6 28 \textit{e}3

The immediate 28 \textit{e}5 permits 28...\textit{g}5, so White first covers the g5-square.

28...\textit{d}8 29 \textit{e}5 \textit{f}7 30 \textit{f}4

Also possible was 30 \textit{g}7+ \textit{g}8 31 \textit{e}5 \textit{e}6 32 \textit{d}4! \textit{x}e3 33 \textit{f}6+ \textit{f}7 34 fxe3, winning the h7-pawn, but the text is even more uncomfortable for Black due to his unsafe king.

30...\textit{c}8?

A tactical oversight. The last chance was 30...\textit{e}8!, preparing a king march to the other flank, when 31 \textit{d}6 \textit{d}7 32 \textit{d}3! \textit{c}8 33 \textit{f}4, with ideas like \textit{e}5 and \textit{c}5-e6, keeps a huge advantage.

31 \textit{g}7+ \textit{g}8 32 \textit{x}d5!

Black resigned in view of 32...\textit{x}d5 33 \textit{x}d5 \textit{w}xd5 34 \textit{e}8 mate.

\begin{center}
\begin{minipage}{0.4\textwidth}

\textbf{Example 121}

\textbf{P.Svidler-A.Motylev}

European Club Cup, Ohrid 2009

\end{minipage}
\end{center}

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A brief look at the position reveals two minor problems for Black: his knight is temporarily out of play on a5, and the light squares on the kingside have been slightly weakened by an earlier ...f7-f6. In the following play, Svidler exploits these factors to a maximum.

26 h4!

Preparing h4-h5 to soften up the g6-pawn.

26...<f7

Motylev prepares 27...<e7 in order to activate his rook. The more restrictive 26...h5 permits 27 g4! intensifying the attack; e.g. 27...<h8? 28 <e4 and the g6-pawn can’t be covered properly, or 27...<xg4 28 <b5! <c6 (after 28...<b6? 29 <xg4 f5 30 <xf5 White wins a pawn) 29 <xg4 <e5 30 <xe5 <xd3 31 <xb7 <xc3 32 e6 with some initiative for White.

27 h5! <e7

Black shouldn’t even think about 27...g5?, clearing the b1-h7 diagonal; e.g. 28 <h6+! <xh6 29 <f3 with the threat of 30 <h3+, and if 29...<g7?, then 30 <f5. But 27...f5!, blocking that same diagonal, is quite reasonable, when 28 <d2 preparing 29 <g5 keeps some initiative.

28 <g4 <e6 29 <g3 <f7?!

A logical follow-up to the previous move, but this gives White the opportunity to bring his rook into the attack. Preferable was 29...<d6!, insisting on the queen exchange, when 30 f4 is well met by 30...<e6! 31 <xg6 <e3+ – Golubev. Thus 30 <h4, keeping up the pressure, is probably a better choice.

30 <b5!

The beginning of quite an unusual and very strong manoeuvre. The rook is swung to the h-file where it will enhance the white attack. Meanwhile, the check on e1 is harmless.

30...b6 31 <xg6 <xg6 32 <h5! <e8?!

After 32...<b7 33 <h3! f5 34 <h4 White also has strong pressure, but the text practically loses a pawn.

33 <h3!

Preparing 34 <h4 with mating threats along the h-file.

33...f5

Obviously 33...<h8 failed to 34 <xh8 <xh8 35 <xg6.

34 <x5!

A decisive blow. Now after 34...<x5 35 <xc7+ Black loses his queen, e.g. 35...<f6 36 <f3 or 35...<f7 36 <h7+.

34...<c6 35 <d3 <e6 36 <h4 <g8 37 <c4! <e1+ 38 <h2 <xc4 39 <h8+ <f7 40 <h7+

Black resigned.
Often a pawn advance is directed at a pawn minority in the opponent’s camp, where it can cause both weak squares and pawns. Here are two examples that feature such “majority” attacks, the first one on the kingside and the second on the queenside.

Example 122
Pr.Nikolic-L.Van Wely
Groningen 1993

White is clearly better thanks to the opponent’s numerous weaknesses. In order to increase the pressure, Nikolic resorts to a typical pawn advance.

29 g3!
Preventing h4-h5 to soften up the black kingside pawns.

29...a5
Van Wely intends ..a5-a4 securing his queenside, but the immediate 29...g7, taking care of the other flank, seemed more relevant.

30 h4! g7
30...a4?! runs into 31 h5 gxh5 32 e5! with a strong attack, now that 32...exf5? 33 xf7 xf7 34 wh7+ leads to mate.

A tempting knight manoeuvre, but the simple 32 xg7? xg7 33 h5 looks just as strong. No matter how Black reacts, he ends up with severe weaknesses; e.g. 33...g5 34 e5! h6 35 wg6+, or 33...f6 34 hxg6 hxg6 35 e5!, heading for g5. Also after 33...gxh5 34 wf3 f6 35 e5! h6 36 wf4!, with the threat of 37 hg5+, White’s attack is decisive.

32...wd7 33 g5+ g8 34 xg7 xg7
Or 34...xg7 35 xe6 with a technical win.

35 e5!
Nikolic prepares the doubling of the major pieces on the e-file, with the rook in front. Thus this piece also gets closer to Black’s king. Anyway, the straightforward 35 h5!? was again very strong.

35...h6 36 e4 we7 37 we2 a4 38 c5 c7 39 we4!
Unfortunately for Black, the c6-pawn can only be saved by removing the queen from the kingside defence.

39...wd6 40 h5!
Finally! Now Black is completely helpless.

40...gxh5
Obviously 40...g5 fails to 41 wg6+.

41 h5 xf8 42 wg4+ wh7 43 e4!
In view of 43...we7 44 g5+, Black resigned.
In a typical Hedgehog position Black is somewhat behind in development. Thus Salov hurries to attack him in his most vulnerable area, the queenside.

11 a4!

Preparing a4-a5 to soften up the a5-square and the a6-pawn. This plan goes well with the deployment of the knight on d2, who can join the attack via b3-a5.

11...c6

After 11...bd7?! 12 a5, preparing 2b3-a5, Black is already under pressure; e.g. 12...e7 13 2b3 d8 14 axb6 axb6 15 a5 a8 16 ac6!, as in the game U.Bönsch-V.Chuchelov, Berlin 1996, which continued 16...xc6 17 xc6 xc6 18 e5 xc4 19 exf6 xf6 20 e3 with a strong initiative.

12 xc6 xc6

Also after 12...xc6 13 a5! b5 14 cxb5 xb5 15 a3!, preparing b3, Black’s queenside becomes exposed.

13 a5! b8

One of several unsatisfactory replies. 13...b5?! 14 cxb5 xb5? 15 e5! was termi-

nal, while after 13...e7 14 b3 b8 15 axb6 xb6 16 d4! White keeps the initiative; e.g. 16...a8 17 a4+! or 16...d7 17 e3!. Thus 13...bxa5! 14 b3 b8 15 xa5 a8 was Black’s safest choice, when 16 d2?! e7 (not 16...xb2? 17 c3 followed by e4-e5) 17 b4 0-0, followed by ...fc8, leaves him just slightly worse due to the weak a6-pawn.

14 axb6

Inferior was 14 b3?! bxa5 15 xa5 a8, transposing to the previous note.

14...xb6

15 e3!

A key move that prepares 16 b3, after which the weakness on a6 will be strongly felt.

15...d7

The knight joins the queenside defence. After 15...e7? 16 b3 c7 17 xb8+ xb8 18 e5! White wins a piece.

16 b3 a7 17 b3

Perhaps 17 xb8+ xb8 18 b4! was even stronger: e.g. 18...xb6 19 b5! axb5 20 cxb5 xb5? 21 b1 winning, or 18 e7 19 b5 20 b3 0-0 21 e3 a8 22 c5 with a clear advantage – Salov.

17...b7

If 17...c5 then 18 b3! is unpleasant, e.g. 18...xb3 19 xb3 xb3 20 xb3 e7
21 \( \text{wa2} \) \( \text{a}7 \) 22 \( \text{wa4+} \), harassing the black king.

18 \( \text{b4!} \)

The pawn joins the attack on \( a6 \), which forces Black’s reply.

18...\( \text{wb6} \) 19 \( \text{wa4!} \)

Defending \( b4 \) and complicating Black’s castling.

19...\( \text{e7} \) 20 \( \text{b2} \) \( \text{f6?} \)

The weakening 20...\( \text{e5} \) was Black’s last chance. After 21 \( \text{f1} \) 0-0 22 \( \text{e3} \) White is strategically much better, but in the game he wins material.

21 \( \text{e5!} \)

A strong blow that liberates the c-pawn.

21...\( \text{xe5} \)

Or 21...\( \text{xe2} \) 22 \( \text{exf6} \) \( \text{c6} \) 23 \( \text{fxg7!} \) \( \text{g8} \)

24 \( \text{c2} \) and wins, while 21...dxe5 22 c5 is similar to the game.

22 c5 \( \text{wc7} \)

Both 22...\( \text{dxc5?} \) 23 \( \text{xe5} \) and 22...\( \text{wb5} \) 23 

\( \text{wx} \text{b5} \) \( \text{axb5} \) 24 \( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{xe5} \) 25 \( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{xb7} \)

26 \( \text{a8+} \) are terminal.

23 \( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{dxe5} \) 24 \( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{xb7} \) 25 c6 \( \text{b6} \) 26

\( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{xc6} \)

By a series of “only moves” Karpov has managed to stay alive, but White’s next leaves him helpless.

27 \( \text{c4!} \)

With the double threat of 28 \( \text{a5} \) and 28 \( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{xb7} \) 29 \( \text{d6+} \). Obviously 27...\( \text{xc4} \) fails to 28 \( \text{xb7} \).

27...\( \text{b8} \) 28 \( \text{xb6} \) 0-0

In view of 28...\( \text{xb6} \) 29 \( \text{a8+} \) or 28...\( \text{xb6} \) 29 \( \text{xb6} \) \( \text{xb6} \) 30 \( \text{a8+} \), Black has to accept losing a piece.

29 \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{e4} \) 30 \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{d5} \) 31 \( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{fc8} \) 32 

\( \text{d3} \)

Black resigned.

Another typical target for the pawn advance is an enemy pawn majority. Such “minority” attacks can take place in many different structures, and in fact we already came across two of them in Psakhis-Drasko (p. 123) and Bouaziz-Jansa (p. 101). Here are a few more examples.

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**Example 124**

**R.Cifuentes Parada-G.Milos**

**Santiago 1989**

At first sight the position seems rather level, but Black has a simple idea at his disposal, one that will soon yield him the upper hand.

26...\( \text{a5!} \)

Initiating a minority attack.

27 \( \text{d1} \) \( \text{a4} \)

White is faced with a typical dilemma: if he swaps on \( a4 \) then the c4-pawn becomes vulnerable, whereas if he doesn’t, then Black’s...\( a4xb3 \) will fix a weakness on \( b3 \).

28 \( \text{d3} \)

Cifuentes opts for the latter, aware that after 28 \( \text{bxa4?} \) \( \text{wa6} \) 29 \( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xa4} \) he would have two weaknesses to look after.

28...\( \text{xb3} \) 29 \( \text{axb3} \)

From now on Black has a slight but enduring advantage thanks to the weak \( b3 \)-pawn. Moreover, he is first to exploit the open a-file.
29...b7 30 f3

Or 30 f3 w a7 heading for a3 – Milos.
30...a8! 31 c2 a2 32 c3 w a8

Preparing ...w a3-b2 in order to swap the defender on c3.
33 d1 a1 34 e2 a3 35 b2

If 35 d1, then 35...g4!, with the double threat of 36 xc4 and 36 e5.
35...b6!

By this the rook gains access to the a-file.
36 d1 a1 37 e2 xf1 38 xf1 w a1 39 e2 a6 40 w c2 d7!

With the deadly threat of 47...h1+; or if
47 g1, then 47 d2 trapping the bishop.
47 e1 d3+

In view of 48 f1 f2! 49 g1 d2 50 a1 b2, White resigned.

Example 125
A.Beliavsky-A.Yusupov
USSR Championship, Moscow
1983

Here is the Carlsbad structure, usually produced by the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit, and where the "classical" minority attack takes place. This subject has been extensively covered in chess literature, so I will limit myself to the present example.

12 a3

Beliavsky prepares b4-b5 to soften up the black queenside pawns. Also possible is 12 ab1 with the same intention; e.g.
12...a5 13 a3, preparing b2-b4. Even the radical 12 xf6 xf6 13 b4 has been seen in practice.

12...d6d7

This structure implies a certain space disadvantage for Black, so generally he is happy to swap pieces.
13 \textit{\texttt{a}xe7}

For the same reason, 13 \textit{\texttt{f}f4} is more popular in today's practice.

13...\textit{\texttt{w}xe7} 14 \textit{\texttt{b}b4} \textit{\texttt{g}g6}

Yusupov searches for activity on "his" flank. In the event of 14...\textit{\texttt{w}f6}, with the threat of 15...\textit{\texttt{a}xh3}, White could play 15 \textit{\texttt{d}h2} intending 15...\textit{\texttt{g}g6}?! 16 \textit{\texttt{f}4}! – Beliavsky, with 17 \textit{\texttt{f}5} to follow.

15 \textit{\texttt{f}c1}

Before taking concrete action White mobilizes his last piece. In contrast, the straightforward 15 \textit{\texttt{b}5}?! permits 15...\textit{\texttt{c}5}! with counterplay. In a future structure with an isolated queen's pawn, the premature \textit{\texttt{b}4}-\textit{\texttt{b}5} advance yields Black a protected square on \textit{\texttt{c}5}.

15...\textit{\texttt{w}f6} 16 \textit{\texttt{w}d1}

White parries the threat of 16...\textit{\texttt{a}xh3} and clears the c-file for the rook at the same time.

16...\textit{\texttt{f}5}?!

Although exchanges generally favour Black in this structure, he should have waited with this one, since now White achieves \textit{\texttt{b}4}-\textit{\texttt{b}5} straight away. Preferable was 16...\textit{\texttt{a}ac8}, intending 17 \textit{\texttt{b}5}?! \textit{\texttt{c}5}! – Beliavsky. White could instead try 17 \textit{\texttt{a}a2}?! followed by \textit{\texttt{a}ac2} before pushing \textit{\texttt{b}4}-\textit{\texttt{b}5}. Also 16...\textit{\texttt{a}6} would be better than the text, since after a later \textit{\texttt{a}3}-\textit{\texttt{a}4} followed by \textit{\texttt{b}4}-\textit{\texttt{b}5}, by capturing ...\textit{\texttt{a}6}xb5 Black gets rid of a potentially weak pawn on the a-file. Finally, the typical resource 16...\textit{\texttt{b}5}?!, intending ...\textit{\texttt{c}6}-\textit{\texttt{c}4}, is less appropriate here due to 17 \textit{\texttt{a}4}! \textit{\texttt{a}6} 18 \textit{\texttt{a}5}, preventing Black's idea and preparing \textit{\texttt{a}a2}-\textit{\texttt{c}2} with pressure on \textit{\texttt{c}6}.

17 \textit{\texttt{b}5}!

Hurrying with the minority attack, exploiting the fact that without a bishop on \textit{\texttt{e}6}, the reply 17...\textit{\texttt{c}5}? would leave the d5-pawn undefended.

17...\textit{\texttt{xa}d}3 18 \textit{\texttt{w}xd}3 \textit{\texttt{a}b}6

Yusupov reinforces his queenside defense and eyes the c4-square.

19 \textit{\texttt{b}xc}6 \textit{\texttt{b}xc}6 20 \textit{\texttt{a}b}1!

Regrouping the knight to \textit{\texttt{d}2}, where it will control \textit{\texttt{c}4} and at the same time assist in the kingside defence.

20...\textit{\texttt{a}ac8}?!

20...\textit{\texttt{e}c}8 seems more prudent, using both rooks in the defence; e.g. 21 \textit{\texttt{a}a}2 \textit{\texttt{w}d}6 22 \textit{\texttt{a}ac2} \textit{\texttt{a}5}! 23 \textit{\texttt{a}bd2} \textit{\texttt{a}4}, gaining some space on the queenside, with just a slight disadvantage.

21 \textit{\texttt{a}a}2!

White enables \textit{\texttt{a}ac2} with increased pressure on the \textit{\texttt{c}6}-pawn, and also removes the rook from the vulnerable \textit{\texttt{a}1}-\textit{\texttt{h}8} diagonal. In contrast, the natural 21 \textit{\texttt{a}bd2}?!
would have run into 21...c5!, when Black frees himself by tactical means.

21...\(\text{\&}h4\)

After 21...\(\text{\&}c4\) 22 \(\text{\&}bd2\) the knight can’t stay on c4 anyway, so Yusupov instead activates the other knight.

22 \(\text{\&}xh4\)

Avoiding 22 \(\text{\&}e5?\) c5! and Black again solves all his problems.

22...\(\text{\&}xh4\) 23 \(\text{\&}d2\) \(\text{\&}e6\) 24 \(\text{\&}ac2\) \(\text{\&}e7\)

Meeting the threat of \(\text{\&}f3-e5\) in advance. 24...\(\text{\&}g6?!\) 25 \(\text{\&}f3\) \(\text{\&}xh3??\) is too optimistic due to 26 \(\text{\&}xg6!\).

25 \(\text{\&}c5\)

If 25 \(\text{\&}f3?!\) then 25...\(\text{\&}c4\) is a little annoying, so Beliaovsky prefers to activate his major pieces.

25...\(\text{\&}c7\) 26 \(\text{\&}b3\) \(\text{\&}d6?!\)

26...\(g6\) was more sensible, avoiding any back rank problems and thus preventing White’s idea on the next move.

27 \(\text{\&}f3!\)

Exploiting the tactic 27...\(\text{\&}c4?\) 28 \(\text{\&}b8+\), White finally manages to improve his knight.

27...\(\text{\&}d7?\)

This leads to material losses. 27...\(f6\) was correct, covering the e5-square and avoiding the back rank mates, when 28 \(a4!\) \(\text{\&}d7\) 29 \(\text{\&}5c3\) followed by \(\text{\&}e1-d3\) yields White a clear, but far from decisive advantage.

28 \(\text{\&}e5!\) \(\text{\&}xc5\)

Both 28...\(\text{\&}b6\) 29 \(\text{\&}xc6\), followed by 30 \(\text{\&}b4\), and 28...\(\text{\&}xe5\) 29 \(\text{\&}b8+\) \(\text{\&}f8\) 30 \(\text{\&}xc7\) \(\text{\&}d3\) 31 \(\text{\&}xc6\) \(\text{\&}xc1\) 32 \(\text{\&}xc1\) are equally disastrous.

29 \(\text{\&}b8+\) \(\text{\&}f8\) 30 \(\text{\&}xc7\) \(f6\) 31 \(\text{\&}xc6\) \(\text{\&}d3\) 32 \(\text{\&}b1\) \(\text{\&}e8\) 33 \(\text{\&}xa7\)

In this desperate position, Black lost on time.

Other openings where the minority attack plays a crucial role are the English with 1...\(e5\) (see Psakhis-Drasko) and the Open Sicilian. In the latter, Black often tries to push forward his queenside pawns, in particular the b-pawn. In the short term, this helps him to gain some space and dislodge the knight from c3, thus reducing White’s central control. In the long run, such a minority attack can leave the white pawn majority restricted and transformed into weaknesses. Let’s see one example from the Accelerated Dragon.

**Example 126**

**N.Short-G.Kamsky**

Candidates match (game 2), Linares 1994
As usual in this kind of structure, White's chances lie in the centre and on the kingside, whereas Black aims at counterplay on the queenside. A special feature in the above position is the unusual location of the black queen - on h5 she complicates a white attack but might also get exposed tactically.

12...b5!

Kamsky hurries with the minority attack. Less effective is 12...a5?! 13 a4! or 12...a6?! 13 Rae1 b5 14 Qxc6 Rxc6 15 Qd4, preparing e4-e5, with a white initiative.

13 Rxe1

The last piece enters the game. Both 13 Rxb5?! and 13 Qxc5?! yield Black strong counterplay after 13...Qb4! 14 Wc4 a5 preparing ...Rac8, but 13 Qe2?! b4 14 Qg3 Wa5 15 Qd5 might be more critical, when 15...Qxd5?! 16 exd5 leaves the knight short of a good destiny.

13...a5!

The queenside expansion continues, now with the threat of 14...a4. Also possible is 13...b4 14 Qxc6 Rxc6 15 Qd5 Qxd5 16 exd5 Qd7. In the game Kamsky gets a better version of this position by first clearing the a-file.

14 a3

After 14 a4?! Qb4 15 Wd2 bxa4 White can't recapture on a4 due to the pressure on e4, while 16 Qc4 WC5! 17 a2 Qc7 leaves him without evident compensation for the pawn.

14...b4 15 Qxc6

This intermediate capture rules out the option of 15 axb4 Qxb4? 16 Wd2 a4, although Black could also consider the simple 15...axb4.

15...Qxc6 16 axb4 axb4 17 Qd5 Qxd5 18 exd5 Qd7

After the smoke has cleared, the first fruit of Black's minority attack can be observed: a weak pawn on b2. Moreover, his own pawn on b4 has a restrictive effect upon White's queenside.

19 Rf2

The strategically desirable 19 Qd4 is met by 19...Qb5! 20 Wxb5 Qxd4+ 21 Wh1 Wh4, when Black's superior bishop yields him a slight but enduring advantage - Ublava. If White tries to avoid this scenario by 20 Ac4?!, then after 20...Qxc4 21 Wxc4 Qxc4 22 Wxb4 Qab8 23 Wa4 Wxd5! 24 Qxg7 Qxg7 25 Qxe7 Qxb2 Black obtains an even bigger advantage.

19...Qf68!

Kamsky is not interested in trading his sound e7-pawn for the weakness on b2.

20 Qb1

Not a pleasant move to make, but after 20 c3?! bxc3 21 bxc3 Qa3 White merely emerges with new weaknesses.

20...Qf5!

Black directs his attention to the c2-pawn. Now 21 Wxf5?! Qxf5 followed by ...Qec8 is rather unpleasant for White, so Short declines the queen exchange.

21 Wd2 Qa4!

Challenging the defender on b3.

22 g4 Wd7 23 Qc4

Both 23 Qxa4 Qxa4 24 Qf1 h5?!, opening a new front, and 23 Wxb4 Qxb3 24
\[ \text{Pawn Play} \]

\[ \text{\( \text{\( w \)b3 \( e \)b8, followed by \( \text{\( d \)xe8} \ 24 \text{\( w \)d3} \) 24 \text{\( w \)xb4? lost a piece to 24...\( \text{\( a \)ab8}, but 24 b3?! intending 24...\( \text{\( b \)b5} \ 25 \text{\( w \)xb4} \text{\( c \)c4} \ 26 \text{\( b \)xc4} \text{\( c \)c7} \ 27 c5! \text{\( d \)xc5} \ 28 \text{\( w \)c4 was perhaps a better choice.} \) 24...\( \text{\( a \)a5!} \)
\]

\[ \text{Insisting on the bishop exchange. Now 25...\( \text{\( a \)b5} \) is inevitable.} \]

\[ \text{\( \text{\( a \)fe1} \ 26 \text{\( b \)b3} \)
\]

\[ \text{After 26 \( \text{\( a \)xb5} \text{\( w \)xb5} \ 27 \text{\( w \)xb5} \text{\( e \)b5} \ 28 \text{\( x \)xe7} \text{\( x \)xd5 Black keeps a clear edge – Ublava.} \)
\]

\[ \text{\( 26...\( \text{\( x \)xc4} \ 27 \text{\( b \)xc4} \text{\( a \)a3} \ 28 \text{\( b \)b3} \text{\( c \)c7!} \)
\]

\[ \text{Of course Black doesn't repair White's pawn structure by 28...\( \text{\( a \)xb3} \) 29 cxb3, but keeps attacking his weak pawns.} \]

\[ \text{\( \text{\( x \)xa3} \text{\( b \)xa3} \ 30 \text{\( w \)xa3} \text{\( w \)xc4} \ 31 \text{\( w \)f3} \text{\( c \)c7} \)
\]

Despite the simplifications Black keeps a clear edge thanks to the weak pawns on c2 and d5.

\[ \text{\( 32 \text{\( w \)e4} \)
\]

\[ \text{Or 32 \( \text{\( e \)e2} \text{\( a \)a4}, exposing White's king and preparing...\text{\( a \)c5.} \)
\]

\[ \text{\( 32...\text{\( w \)xe4?!} \)
\]

\[ \text{The prophylactic 32...\( \text{\( f \)f8! led to the win of a pawn.} \)
\]

\[ \text{\( \text{\( a \)xe4} \text{\( f \)f5!} \)
\]

\[ \text{Gaining some light square control and fixing the f4-pawn.} \]

\[ \text{\( 34 \text{\( a \)e2} \text{\( f \)f7} \ 35 \text{\( a \)g2} \text{\( c \)c4} \ 36 \text{\( a \)e3?!} \)
\]

\[ \text{White returns the favour. 36 \( \text{\( f \)f3} \text{\( d \)d4} \ 37 \text{\( a \)h4} \text{\( c \)c3+ 38 \text{\( g \)g2} \text{\( f \)f6} 39 \text{\( f \)f2! kept reasonable chances for a draw, and so does \( \text{\( c \)c1 on the next two moves. In contrast, after the bishop exchange he is unable cover all his weaknesses.} \)
\]

\[ \text{\( 36...\text{\( d \)d4} \ 37 \text{\( g \)xf5} \text{\( x \)xf5} \ 38 \text{\( f \)f2\?} \text{\( x \)xe3+ 39 \text{\( x \)xe3} \text{\( c \)c3+} \ 40 \text{\( d \)d4} \)
\]

\[ \text{40 \( \text{\( f \)f2} \text{\( x \)h3 is just as hopeless.} \)
\]

\[ \text{40...\text{\( f \)f3! 41 \text{\( e \)e3} \text{\( x \)xf4+ 42 \text{\( d \)d3} \text{\( h \)5} \)
\]

\[ \text{Black soon realized his extra pawn.} \]

\[ \text{Sometimes pawn advances can be used to cause doubled pawns in the enemy camp. Here is one example.} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{Example 127}} \]

\[ \text{V.Bogdanovski-D.Cummings} \]

\[ \text{European Team Championship, Pula 1997} \]

\[ \text{\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example127.png}
\end{center}} \]

\[ \text{Black has just played...\text{\( w \)d8-c7, attacking the e5-pawn, but White has no intention of defending it.} \]

\[ \text{\( 13 \text{\( e \)e6!} \text{\( x \)xe6} \ 14 \text{\( f \)f4!} \)
\]

\[ \text{The previous pawn moves created a series of weaknesses on the e-file, and White immediately exploits one of them. Less} \]

\[ \text{155} \]
clear was 14  

14...  

Or 15...  

16  

Preparing , an idea that Black immediately prevents.

Eyeing the weakness on e6. 17  

17...  

17... was a more active try, when 18 19 20 21 22  

After 18... 19 20 White has a superior endgame thanks to the bishop pair, while 18... 19 20 21 also seems a bit better for him.

19  

After provoking the displacement of the enemy knight, the bishop returns to its preferred diagonal.

White now has a stable advantage thanks to his more active pieces, whereas the weak pawns on e6 and e7 are still waiting to be exploited.

There was the threat of 21 .

21 22  

Parrying the threat of 23 , but now the queen finds another interesting destiny.

23  

Or 23... 24 25 26 27 28 29 30  

After seizing the seventh rank, White opens a new front.

24... 25 26  

This leads to a decisive weakening of the dark squares. Correct was 25... 26 27 28 29 30 with just a slight disadvantage – Horn.

The e7-pawn is doomed, and indirectly the whole black position.

At this point Bogdanovski for some reason regretted his previous strong move, and after 31 32 he had to start all over again in order to score the full point. However, 31 , preparing a combination with 32 , won virtually on the spot; e.g. 31... 32 33 34 35 when both 32 33 and 32... 33 are fatal for Black.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 331.

Passed pawns

Among all positional elements the passed pawn is of exceptional importance, and the nature of the battle often changes drasti-
cally once it appears on the board. We already came across this subject in several of the previous examples, such as Efimenko-Neoverov, Pelletier-Sebag, Brynell-Moberg and Johannessen-Nakamura, to name a few. Let's see some more examples.

**Example 128**

*S.Gligoric-P.Popovic*

Novi Sad 1979

![Chess board diagram]

In this position from the Grünfeld, White enjoys a pleasant advantage. His pawn centre is intact, Black has not managed to create any of the counterplay characteristic of this opening, and he also suffers from the departure of his fianchettoed bishop. Without bothering about the a2-pawn, Gligoric proceeds with the inherent plan of the position.

26 d5!

Creating a passed pawn. Usually passed pawns become stronger with each step they take, so this is a good moment for its creation, considering that Black can't stop a subsequent d5-d6.

26...exd5?

The following rook exchange will just leave the back rank more vulnerable to tactical threats. 26...fxa2?! 27 d6 followed by 28 d7 was even more risky for Black, but by 26...c2! 27 f1 exd5 28 exd5 ed8 29 d6 f6 he would at least have managed to stop the d-pawn from reaching the seventh rank.

27 exd5 xe1+ 28 xe1

Now there appears the double threat of \( \text{wx} b4 \) and d6-d7.

28...xa2

After 28...a6 29 d6 \( \text{wf} 8 \) 30 d7 \( \text{ad} 8 \) 31 \( \text{f} 3 \) c5 32 e5 the strength of the passed pawn is evident. Black can't do anything against the plan of \( \text{wg} 4 \) followed by c6.

29 d6! g5 30 d7!

The further this pawn gets, the stronger.

30...d8

![Chess board diagram]

31 wc4?!

By 31 we4! White would have obtained a decisive attack; e.g. 31...c3 32 we7! \( \text{wf} 8 \) 33 \( \text{wx} g5+ \) \( \text{wh} 7 \) 34 \( \text{ad} 3 \), or 31...\( \text{wf} 8 \) 32 \( \text{wg} 4 \) \( \text{we} 7 \) 33 \( \text{df} 3 \) \( \text{f} 6 \) 34 \( \text{eg} x g5! \) \( \text{fx} g5 \) 35 \( \text{ad} 5 \). In general terms, the side with a passed pawn is often happy to start an attack on the opponent's king, since the latter has fewer defensive resources available.

31...c3 32 c1 \( \text{wd} 4 \)!

The lesser evil, in order to avoid an attack. After 32...x7?! 33 \( \text{wc} 8+ \) \( \text{wh} 7 \) 34 \( \text{xc} 3 \) White soon wins.
This endgame is won thanks to the fact that Black’s passed pawns haven’t yet managed to advance. Gligoric proceeded in technical fashion: 35...f6 36 w e2 w f7 37 w c6! (cutting off the king) 37...w g6 38 w c2 g4 39 w e3 w d4 40 g3! (fixing the enemy pawns as future targets) 40...w g5 41 w c7 w a4 42 w g7+ w h5 43 w d5 and Black resigned in view of 43...f5 44 w f4+ w h6 45 w g6+ w h7 46 w f6 w a5 47 w e3, followed by w h5 and w f4.

Example 129
J.Hellsten-L.Rojas
Santiago 2006

Another structure that frequently produces a passed pawn is the one with hanging pawns. In the above position, if White was to move then 24 w a4! would be an excellent option, keeping the hanging pawns at bay. But it is Black’s turn, and he immediately proceeds with the creation of a passed pawn.

24...d4! 25 w a4

The opening of the c-file after 25 exd4?! cxd4 disfavours White, since any future rook exchanges will weaken his defence of the back rank.

25...w d5!

The most active defence of the d5-pawn. Now after 26 exd4 cxd4 White can’t take on c6 and d4 due to the back rank mate.

26 w e2?

A bad move, since it lets the passed pawn advance even further. After 26 f3! w d7 27 e4 w g5 White remains under pressure, but at least he doesn’t have to worry about the d-pawn for a while.

26...d3! 27 w f3 w e6 28 w c3 w d8

With the double threat of 29...w g4 and 29...d2.

29 w d2 c4!

A key move, in order to clear some space in the area of the passed pawn.

30 e4 cxb3!

Both 30...w g4 and 30...w g6 were playable as well, but the text is more effective. As we will see next, far advanced passed pawns tend to have a great tactical potential.

31 exf5

After 31 w xf5 w xf5 32 exf5 w d8 Black is winning, since 33 w d3 fails to 33...b2 followed by 34...w xc3 and ...w c1 in the end.

31...w xc3!

A well-calculated queen sacrifice that produces a second strong passed pawn.

32 fxe6 w xc1+ 33 w d1 b2 34 e7
The only way of parrying the threat 34...b1\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}.
34...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}e8!

Rojas swaps the d3-pawn for the one on e7, aware that his remaining passed pawn will decide the game. I had only anticipated 34...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}b8?, when 35 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}xd3 b1\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}} 36 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}xb1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}xb1 37 e8\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}+! \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}xe8 38 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}xb1 lets White fight for a draw in the rook endgame; e.g. 38...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}e2 39 h4! \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}xa2 40 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{B}}b8+ \textcolor{red}{\texttt{W}}h7 41 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{B}}a8 followed by 42 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{B}}a7.
35 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}xd3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}xe7

With the double threat of 36...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}e1+ and 36...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}b7.
36 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}d8+ \textcolor{red}{\texttt{W}}h7 37 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}d3+ g6 38 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{B}}f1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}b7!

In view of 39 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}d2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{B}}xd1+ 40 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}xd1 b1\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}, White resigned.

\textbf{Example 130}

R.Åström-Je.Hall
Swedish Championship,
Linköping 1996

\textbf{17 b4?}

A typical idea in such structures, but on this particular occasion it runs into a strong antidote. 17 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}}e3 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}e6 18 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{B}}c1 b6 19 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}}c4 was preferable, slowly improving the pieces.
17...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}xb4 18 axb4 a4!

Of course! This passed pawn will turn into a headache for White.

\textbf{19 b5 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}}d4 20 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}}e3}

A more recent encounter continued 20 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}}xd4?! exd4 21 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}b4 a3 22 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}a1 f5 23 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}c1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}fe8 24 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{B}}c7 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{W}}h8! (ruling out a \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{B}}xg7+ sacrifice) 25 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}bc4 a2 with a huge advantage, S.Pelipenko-V.Bardjuzha, Kharkov 2004. In our game, White at least manages to install the knight on the protected square c4.
20...\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}e6 21 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}}c4 f5!

Preparing ...e5-e4 in order to clear the long diagonal for the bishop, after which the passed pawn will become even more dangerous. Also interesting was 21...e4!? in the same spirit, whereas 21...a3, according to the principle that passed pawns should always advance, permits 22 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}a1 a2 (or 22...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}xb5 23 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{B}}b4!) 23 e3! \textcolor{red}{\texttt{N}}xb5 24 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{W}}b3, when it is not clear whether Black can hold on to that pawn.
22 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{Q}}e3

White prepares to swap the active black
Mastering Chess Strategy

Knight, aware that 22 e3?! Qb3 23 a4
Af8 followed by ...e5-e4 leads to trouble
for him.

22...e4! 23 Qxd4 Qxd4 24 b4!

Active defence. The slower 24 Qc2?! runs into 24...exd3 25 Qxd3 (or 25 exd3 f4!,
opening a second front) 25...Qfd8 26 Qc2
a3 with the double threat of 27...a2 and
27...Qac8.

24...a3 25 dx e4?

A lesser evil was 25 Qxa3 Qc5 26 Qc2
Qxb4 27 Qxb4 Qfd8 with a clear, yet not
desirable advantage for Black.

25...Qc5?

Black misses 25...Qc3!, when 26 Qa4 a2
wins on the spot, and 26 exf5 gxf5 27 Qb3
Qxb4 28 Qxb4 a2 29 Qa1 f4!, opening a
new front, is equally hopeless for White.

26 Qa4 Qxa4 27 Qxa4 Qxe4

The previous exchanges have not eased
White’s task in any way. Apart from taking
constant care of the passed pawn, he also
has to look out for a potential black attack
on the kingside. On top of all that, the
bishop is very strong in this kind of open
position with pawns on both flanks.

28 Qb3 Qe6 29 e3

Preventing ...f5-f4. If 29 Qa4, then
29...f4! 30 Qxa3 fxg3 31 hgx3 Qxf2+! 32
Qxf2 Qe3 and Black wins – Hall.

29...Qe7! 30 Qa1

Thanks to Black’s previous move, he
could now meet 30 Qa4? by 30...Qc8! 31
Qxa3 Qa2, winning the knight.

30...Qa8

Or 30...Qc8 31 Qc1, followed by 32 Qc2,
with similar play as in the game.

31 Qa2 Qc8 32 Qc2 Qd8 33 Qc3 Qa8 34 Qc2
h5!

After repeating moves Hall proceeds
with a thematic advance that helps him to
open a new front on the kingside.

35 h4

Aström correctly prevents ...h5-h4, but
as we will see soon, this doesn’t make the
white kingside impenetrable.

35...Qh7 36 Qh2 Qc8 37 Qc1

White is reduced to waiting tactics.

37...Qa8 38 Qc2

38...Qg5!

Black finally breaks through on the king-
side. Now White will have a hard time de-
fending both flanks.

39 hxg5 Qxg5 40 Qa2 h4! 41 f4

After 41 Qd2 Qc8 42 Qc2 hxg3+ 43 fxg3
Qd5, followed by ...Qg7 and ...Qh8, White is
helpless.

41...hxg3+ 42 Qxg3 Qh4+! 43 Qh2

Or 43 Qxh4? Qg8 with a quick mate.

43...Qh6 44 Qg1 Qg8+ 45 Qf1
If 45...\textit{g}2, then 45...\textit{x}g2+ 46 \textit{w}xg2 \textit{w}g6+ 47 \textit{f}1 \textit{g}3 48 \textit{e}2 a2!, exhausting White’s defence.

\textit{45...f6!}

Starting the final attack. 45...\textit{w}g6 is also strong.

\textit{46 e5 \textit{w}h1+ 47 \textit{e}2 \textit{w}g2+ 48 \textit{d}3 \textit{w}e4+ 49 \textit{e}2 \textit{x}e5 50 \textit{f}xe5 \textit{g}2+ 51 \textit{e}1 \textit{d}1 \textit{w}h1 mate}

Or 51 \textit{d}1 \textit{w}f3+ 52 \textit{e}1 \textit{x}a2, when both 53 \textit{w}xa2 \textit{w}h1+ 54 \textit{f}2 \textit{h}6+ and 53 \textit{w}f7+ \textit{h}6 54 \textit{w}f6+ \textit{h}5, followed by ...\textit{g}4-\textit{h}3-\textit{g}2, lead to a black win.

\textit{51...w4+ 52 d1 w1 mate}

Virtually any measure is allowed in the fight for a passed pawn’s advance. In Hellsten-Rojas we saw a queen sacrifice supporting this idea, while the following example features a concession of a more positional nature.

\textit{Example 131}

\textit{J.Dorfman-D.Paunovic}

\textit{Minsk 1986}

\textit{30 f2}

Of course not 30 a6? \textit{c}7 31 a7 \textit{b}5 and the pawn is lost.

\textit{30...f6 31 b4!}

Heading for b6 to liberate the rook from the defence of the pawn.

\textit{31...c7 32 c1 a6}

After 32...a6? 33 d6 c8 34 b1 White breaks through on the queenside. Thus Black’s rook is obliged to take up a passive role on a6, so that the knight can block the b-file by ...\textit{b}5 if necessary.

\textit{33 e3 b5 34 a1 f7 35 c5 e8 36 b6}

White is speculating with two different ideas: enter with the king via d2-c3-b4-c5, or penetrate with the rook on the open g- or b-file.

\textit{36...d6 37 d2 c8}

\textit{Pawn Play}
Black would have liked to keep blocking the b-file by 37...\(\text{b}5\), but after 38 \(\text{g}1\) \(\text{f}7\) 39 \(\text{c}1\) \(\text{a}7\) 40 \(\text{c}3\) the plan of \(\text{b}4\)-\(\text{c}5\) proves inevitable; e.g. 40...\(\text{c}8\) 41 \(\text{b}4!\) \(\text{xb}6\) 42 \(\text{xc}6\) and White wins. 37...\(\text{d}7?\) 38 \(\text{g}1\) is also bad.

38 \(\text{c}5\) \(\text{e}7\)

39 \(\text{b}1!\)

Using some minor tactics Dorfman manages to enter with the rook. Less convincing was 39 \(\text{c}3?!\) \(\text{g}6\) with a counter-attack on the f4-pawn.

39...\(\text{g}6\)

After 39...\(\text{xa}5?\) 40 \(\text{b}8+\), followed by 41 \(\text{b}7(+)\), White wins material.

40 \(\text{b}8+\) \(\text{f}7\) 41 \(\text{b}7+\) \(\text{e}8\) 42 \(\text{b}6\)

Again securing the passed pawn. Now that the battle is no longer limited to a single flank, Black is practically lost due to his passive rook.

42...\(\text{xf}4\) 43 \(\text{h}7\) \(\text{e}5\)

At this point the game continued 44 \(\text{h}6?!\) \(\text{e}4\) 45 \(\text{xf}6\) \(\text{xd}3\) and White’s task was somewhat complicated, although Dorfman won in the end. However, the thematic 44 \(\text{h}4!\), advancing the second passed pawn, was considerably simpler; for example, 44...\(\text{e}4\) 45 \(\text{h}5!\) \(\text{exf}3\) 46 \(\text{e}3\) followed by \(\text{h}5\)-\(\text{h}6\), or 44...\(\text{e}6\) 45 \(\text{h}5\) \(\text{xd}4\) 46 \(\text{h}6!\) \(\text{f}8\) 47 \(\text{b}7\), when both 47...\(\text{g}8\) 48 \(\text{h}7+\)

\(\text{h}8\) 49 \(\text{d}8!\) \(\text{c}5\) 50 \(\text{f}7\) and 47...\(\text{xf}3+\) 48 \(\text{e}3\) \(\text{g}5\) 49 \(\text{h}7\) \(\text{hxh}7\) 50 \(\text{xh}7\) lead to a quick win.

Naturally, a passed pawn doesn’t mean victory in every position, and it tends to lose some of its strength if the opponent manages to block it. Usually the best blocker is the knight, a topic we came across briefly in Mikhalevski-Ehrlvest (p. 57). Here is another example.

**Example 132**

B.Spassky-A.Karpov

Candidates match (game 6), Leningrad 1974

In a structure typical of openings such as the Slav and the Caro-Kann, Spassky proceeds with a strong advance that will clear the long diagonal and the central files for his pieces.

22 \(\text{d}5!\) \(\text{cxd}5\) 23 \(\text{cxd}5\)

Now after 23...\(\text{exd}5?!\) 24 \(\text{xd}5\) the pin along the e-file is problematic for Black, whose bishop can’t move due to 25 \(\text{xe}8+\). If he, instead, avoids this scenario by 23...\(\text{e}5\), then after 24 \(\text{d}6\) White obtains a dangerous passed pawn.

23...\(\text{e}5!\)
Anyway! Karpov has estimated that, with the passed pawn being safely blocked by the knight on d7, he faces no immediate danger.

24 d6

After 24 Qxe5?! Wxe2 25 Qxe2 A.d6 it is White who suffers from a pin, e.g. 26 Mde1 Qxe5 27 Qxe5 A.xa3 and the d5-pawn can’t be saved.

24...Qf6 25 Qd2

Spassky regroups the knight to c4/e4 and prevents the ...e5-e4 strike. If 25 Wb5, avoiding the queen exchange, then 25...e4! keeps the balance; e.g. 26 Qd4 e3! 27 fx3 Mx3 with counterplay, or 26 Qh2 Wg5! 27 A.d5 Wg6 28 A.xf6 A.xf6 29 A.dd1 A.d7 followed by ...M.ed8 – Karpov.

25...Wxe2 26 Axe2 Mc8!

Karpov distributes the small space at his disposal in a clever way. The rook doesn’t just seize the open file, it also vacates the d8-b6 route for the bishop, which in turn enables the consolidating plan of ...f7-f6 and ...Wf7-e6.

27 Q.e4?!

This pseudo-active move does nothing to stop the plan just mentioned; the same goes for 27 Qc4 b5 followed by ...A.d8 and ...f7-f6.

Instead, the flexible 27 Wf1! was critical – Larsen. Now 27 ...A.d8 can be met by 28 f4! opening a new front, e.g. 28...f6 29 Wxe5 fxe5 30 A.c4 with pressure; while after 27...Cc2 28 Qc4 A.xe2 29 Wxe2 A.d8 30 a4 followed by A.c1-e3, or 27...Cc8 26 Qc4 b5 29 Da5 Cc8 30 Md5 a6 31 b4 intending Db3-c5, White keeps some advantage.

27...A.d8 28 g4 f6 29 Wg2 Wf7 30 Ac1?!

Usually exchanges favour the side with the passed pawn, but in this particular case they will just make it easier for Black to attack the d6-pawn with his king. More active was 30 M.f1!, followed by f2-f4, in order to open a new front.

30...b6 31 Mec2 Axc2 32 Axc2 A.e6

Now the passed pawn is more of a burden than an asset to White.

33 a4 a5 34 A.a3 A.b8!

Having neutralized the passed pawn, Black starts looking for activity. This apparently innocent move prepares the plan of ...A.d4 and ...b7-b5, whereas the immediate 34...A.d4?! was less precise due to 35 Ac7.

35 Ac4 A.d4 36 f4

If 36 Qc3, covering the b5-square, then 36...Qb6 37 Mc7 Axc3 38 Axc3 A.ds1 followed by ...b7-b5. In the game Spassky instead tries to achieve f4-f5.

36...g6 37 Qg3 exf4!

Aware that 37...b5?! runs into 38 f5+ gxf5 39 gxf5+ A.d5 40 Mc7, Karpov adjusts his plans and stops f4-f5 once and for all.

38 Axd4 fxg3 39 A.xg3 Ac8

Thanks to his more active pieces Black enjoys a pleasant advantage. Now there appears the threat of 40...Ac3!.

40 A.d3

40 Ac4? failed to 40...Axc4 41 bxc4 Qb6, while 40 Qe4+ Qe5 41 g5 doesn’t work due to 41...A.c3+ 42 Qg2 Axb3, when both 43 gxf6 Axf6 and 43 d7 A.d3! let Black keep the extra pawn.

40...g5!
Ruling out any attempts with 41 \textbf{Me}\textsubscript{3}+ followed by g4-g5.

41 \textbf{Mb}2 \textbf{b}6 42 \textbf{M}d4?!

White should have tried the simplifying 42 \textbf{Mc}3 \textbf{M}xc3+ 43 \textbf{M}xc3 \textbf{Md}6 44 b4, when 44...b5! 45 bxa5 bxa4 keeps good winning chances.

42...\textbf{Mc}6 43 \textbf{M}c3 \textbf{Mc}5

Karpov dismisses 43...\textbf{Md}xd6 44 \textbf{M}xd6+ \textbf{M}xd6, transposing to the previous note, and keeps searching for a bigger advantage. Meanwhile, White can just wait.

44 \textbf{M}g2 \textbf{M}c8 45 \textbf{M}g3 \textbf{Me}5!

Now after 46 \textbf{Me}3 \textbf{M}xd6 Black wins the d-pawn without having to swap his active rook, so White prefers a rook endgame.

46 \textbf{M}xe5 \textbf{fxe}5 47 b4?

This active defence backfires after Black's reply. Correct was 47 \textbf{M}f3 \textbf{M}d8 48 \textbf{Me}3 \textbf{M}xd6 49 \textbf{M}c3, heading for c8, with some chances for a draw. On the other hand, 48 b4? axb4 49 \textbf{Mb}3 fails to 48...\textbf{M}f8+! followed by 49...\textbf{M}f4.

47...e4! 48 \textbf{M}d4

Or 48 \textbf{Me}3 \textbf{M}c4 with an easy win.

48...\textbf{M}e5

Now Black obtains a second passed pawn on the b-file, and 49 d7 \textbf{M}d8 doesn’t change much.

49 \textbf{Md}1 axb4

The game ended 50 \textbf{Mb}1 \textbf{M}c3+ 51 \textbf{M}f2 \textbf{Md}3! 52 d7 \textbf{M}xd7 53 \textbf{M}xb4 \textbf{Md}6 54 \textbf{M}e3 \textbf{M}d3+ 55 \textbf{Me}2 \textbf{M}a3 0-1, in view of the black king's entry at f4.

In the previous example Spassky was right in creating the passed pawn, but later failed to exploit it. On other occasions, the creation of a passed pawn simply isn’t the best choice in the position. Here is one example.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Example 133} \hfill \\
\textbf{Z.Ilinic-Kir.Georgiev} \hfill \\
Cacak 1995
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Diagram}
\end{center}

White enjoys a strong pawn centre, but the opponent's pieces are well organized. How to proceed?

20 \textbf{Mb}5?!

Preparing d4-d5 in order to create a passed pawn, but as we will soon see, this won’t have the desired effect. Preferable was 20 \textbf{M}bc1 \textbf{M}a5 21 \textbf{M}d3 with an equal game – Georgiev.

20...\textbf{M}a5 21 d5?

It was not too late for 21 \textbf{Mb}4 \textbf{M}c6 22 \textbf{M}d3, saving the d4-d5 idea for the future.

21...\textbf{exd}5 22 \textbf{exd}5 \textbf{M}b7!
A key move, that creates the threat of 23...\(\text{Cc5}\), and also keeps an eye on the important d6-square. 22...\(\text{Af5}\) 23 d6! is less clear, when 23...\(\text{Db7}\) fails to 24 \(\text{Bxf5!}\) and 23...\(\text{Cc4}\) permits 24 \(\text{Gg3!}\) \(\text{Dfxd6}\) 25 \(\text{Bxd6}\) \(\text{Dxd6}\) 26 \(\text{Bbd5}\) with strong pressure.

23 \(\text{Ae3}\)

Now 23 d6? fails to 23...\(\text{Cc5}\), while 23 \(\text{Bb4}\) \(\text{Dxd5}\) 24 \(\text{Bbd4}\) \(\text{Cc6}\) leaves White without sufficient compensation for the pawn.

23...\(\text{Cc2!}\) 24 \(\text{Af4}\)

The natural 24 \(\text{Dd4?}\) failed to 24...\(\text{Cc5}\).

24...\(\text{Af5}\) 25 \(\text{Af2}\)

27 \(\text{Wd3}\), covering the e3-square, was safer, when 27...\(\text{Wc7}\) preparing...\(\text{Cc3}\) keeps the initiative.

27...\(\text{De3}\) 28 \(\text{Wd3}\) \(\text{Bxf2}\) 29 \(\text{Bxf2}\) \(\text{Bxd1+}\) 30 \(\text{Wxd1}\) \(\text{Wc7!}\)

After the departure of his bishop, White is suffering on the dark squares.

31 \(\text{Bb3}\)?

This exposes the king to a strong attack. White had to try something like 31 \(\text{Gg2}\) \(\text{Cc4}\) 32 \(\text{Wd4}\) \(\text{De3+}\) 33 \(\text{Wb3}\) \(\text{Cc1}\) 34 \(\text{Wd3}\) with marginal chances of defence.

31...\(\text{Dxe4+}\) 32 \(\text{fxe4}\) \(\text{Wxf4+}\) 33 \(\text{Wxf3}\) \(\text{Wxh2+}\) 34 \(\text{De3}\) \(\text{Wg1+}\) 35 \(\text{Af4}\)?

After 35 \(\text{Wd3}\) \(\text{Cc8}\) the white king has a hard time, but now he is mated.

35...\(\text{g5+}\) 36 \(\text{Af5}\) \(\text{Wd4!}\)

White resigned.

Needless to say, two connected passed pawns represent a tremendous force, one that often justifies material concessions. Let’s see two examples.

Example 134

E.Van den Doel-G.Guseinov
European Team Championship, Gothenburg 2005
In this Maróczy structure Black has just played ...a7-a6?, probably expecting a further positional battle after 15 ♗d4 or 15 ♘a3. White’s reply must have come as a cold shower.

15 ♘a4!

Van den Doel alters the material balance in order to create a few powerful passed pawns. The next moves are practically forced.

15...axb5 16 ♘xb6 ♙d8 17 cxb5 ♘e5 18 ♙xc8!

Stronger than 18 ♘xc8?! ♘xc8, when the black rook prevents the march of the a-pawn.

18...♘xc8 19 ♘xc8 ♙xc8 20 a4!

Of course. Now the connected passed pawns turn into a headache for Black.

20...♗c4

If 20...d5, then 21 a5 dxe4 22 ♙d8+! ♘f8 23 ♙xc8 ♘xc8 24 ♙d8 with a6-a7 coming up next.

21 ♙c2!

A great move. Confident about the strength of his passed pawns, White is ready to give up a whole piece in order to exchange queens and reach an endgame.

21...♗xe3 22 ♙xc8+ ♘xc8 23 ♙c1 ♘e6

After 23...♗d7 24 b6! ♗xa4 25 b7 ♘d7 26 ♙c8+ ♘f8 27 b3! ♘xb3 28 ♙b5 White wins – Finkel. As for 23...♗b7, the most technical way to victory is 24 ♙c7 ♘h5 25 g3! ♘xb2 26 ♙xb7 ♙d4 27 ♙h1 followed by a5-a6.

24 b6!

Forward!

24...♗h6 25 b7 ♘g7

A surrealistic attempt for counterplay, but 25...♗d7 just loses after 26 ♙b5 ♘b8 27 ♙c8+! – Finkel.

26 ♙b8 ♘xg2 27 ♙c3 ♘f4 28 ♙c4

White soon realized his loads of extra material.

Example 135
J.Hellsten-E.Mohamed
Malmö 1992

Here is a less violent case on the same topic. In exchange for the pawn Black enjoys a strong bishop pair, with pressure on the e3-pawn. How should White defend it? After 19 ♙xb6? axb6 he loses one of the pawns on a2 and e3, while 19 ♘f3?! e4 20 ♙g3 f5 yields Black a strong initiative. After some thinking I found a third, and much better option.

19 ♙c3!

Preparing an exchange sacrifice that
will neutralize Black’s activity and leave White with two connected passed pawns.

19...\texttt{\textbf{b}4}

A tempting reply, but with hindsight 19...\texttt{f5} might have been a better choice. White could react by 20 \texttt{\textbf{h1} f4} 21 exf4 exf4 22 \texttt{\textbf{d}3}, when 22...\texttt{\textbf{d}4} 23 \texttt{\textbf{x}g6! \textbf{xc}3} 24 \texttt{\textbf{x}h7+ \textbf{x}h7} 25 \texttt{\textbf{w}xc3} followed by \texttt{\textbf{f}3} promises him some advantage.

![Chess Diagram]

20 \texttt{\textbf{a}3 \textbf{xc}3} 21 \texttt{\textbf{w}xc3}

Black has won the exchange, but the departure of his dark-squared bishop has made the pawns on c4 and d5 more dangerous. To start with, there is the threat of 22 \texttt{c5}.

21...\texttt{\textbf{wd}6}

21...\texttt{\textbf{ac}8} 22 \texttt{\textbf{c}1 \textbf{wd}6} 23 \texttt{\textbf{f}3} transposes.

22 \texttt{\textbf{f}3!}

Renewing the threat of c4-c5. 22 b4?! is less appropriate due to 22...b5! destroying the white pawn chain.

22...\texttt{\textbf{ac}8} 23 \texttt{\textbf{c}1}

Not 23 e4?! b5! and Black again manages to undermine the passed pawns.

23...\texttt{\textbf{fe}8}

Mohamed finally accepts the c4-c5 advance, aware that 23...b6?! 24 b4 makes little sense; e.g. 24...\texttt{\textbf{c}7} 25 c5 bxc5 26 bxc5 \texttt{\textbf{fc}8?} 27 cxd6 \texttt{\textbf{xc}3} 28 \texttt{\textbf{xc}3 \textbf{xc}3} 29 d7 and

White wins. During the game I thought that 23...\texttt{\textbf{e}4} was the best option, but after the simple 24 \texttt{\textbf{xe}4 \textbf{xe}4} 25 \texttt{\textbf{xe}4 \textbf{fe}8} 26 \texttt{\textbf{f}3} Black remains in difficulties.

24 \texttt{\textbf{c}5 \textbf{wd}7} 25 \texttt{\textbf{e}4}

By means of the threat of 26 \texttt{\textbf{d}6} White practically forces the exchange of the active black bishop. In contrast, 25 \texttt{d6?!} proves premature after 25...\texttt{\textbf{e}6!} with ...\texttt{\textbf{x}d6} coming up.

25...\texttt{\textbf{xe}4} 26 \texttt{\textbf{xe}4 \textbf{f}5} 27 \texttt{\textbf{c}2!}

The impulsive 27 \texttt{c6?!} permits 27...bxc6 28 dxc6 \texttt{\textbf{we}6} with rather unclear play.

27...\texttt{\textbf{h}8} 28 \texttt{\textbf{e}4}

But now there was nothing wrong with 28 d6. I think that I choose the text in order to rule out any attempt with ...\texttt{e5-e4} followed by ...\texttt{f5-f4}.

28...\texttt{\textbf{f}8}

Here and later, 28...\texttt{f4} is well met by 29 \texttt{\textbf{d}1!}.

29 \texttt{\textbf{b}4}

The rest is surprisingly easy. In the absence of open files, Black is unable to create any real counterplay with his rooks.

29...\texttt{\textbf{f}6} 30 \texttt{\textbf{e}1 \textbf{e}8} 31 \texttt{\textbf{wd}3 \textbf{xe}4}

This clears the f-file but also produces a weakness on e5.

32 \texttt{\textbf{we}4} \texttt{\textbf{g}6} 33 \texttt{\textbf{d}6! \textbf{f}4} 34 \texttt{\textbf{we}3 \textbf{a}5} 35 \texttt{\textbf{c}3!} a\texttt{xb}4 36 a\texttt{xb}4 \texttt{\textbf{d}4}

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Now Black loses a pawn, but after 36...\textit{W}g7 37 b5 \textit{Af}6 38 \textit{Ad}1 preparing c5-c6, White is also winning.

\[ \text{37 } \textit{Ax}e5 \textit{Ax}e5 \text{ 38 } \textit{Wxd}4 \textit{Wg}7 \text{ 39 } \textit{Ae}4 \]

The game concluded 39...\textit{Ae}7 40 \textit{Wxg}7+ \textit{Axg}7 41 \textit{Axb}7! \textit{Ax}b7 42 c6 \textit{Ab}4 43 c7 \textit{Ab}1+ 44 \textit{Ah}2 \textit{Ac}1 45 d7 and Black resigned.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 334.

\textbf{Pawn majorities}

Many openings produce some kind of asymmetry regarding the pawn structure. One of the players obtains a pawn majority on the queenside, and his opponent one on the kingside, a situation already familiar to us from Hellsten-Brolljaca and Brynell-Moberg, among others. Such majorities can be converted into a passed pawn, and they can also support an attack on the enemy king.

Let’s start with queenside majorities. In the usual positions where both sides have castled short, a queenside pawn majority has two fundamental virtues: its advance won’t expose the king, and a future passed pawn will be at some distance from the enemy king in the endgame. The latter implies that the side with the queenside majority is often happy to exchange pieces and take the game closer to the endgame. The following example shows the kind of position that he is aiming at.

\textbf{Example 136}

\textbf{V.Smyslov-L.Szabo}

Hastings 1954/55

Thanks to his advanced pawn majority on the queenside, White has a big advantage. Of course its impact would be less strong with the black king on c7.

\[ \text{28...}\textit{Ed}8 \]

As long as the white rook remains on d2, Black’s king won’t be able to assist in the queenside defence, so it makes sense to exchange rooks.

\[ \text{29 } \textit{Wxd}8 \textit{Axd}8 \text{ 30 } f4! \]

The bishop joins the battle for the queenside.

\[ \text{30...gx}f4 \text{ 31 } \textit{gx}f4 \textit{Ab}3 \]

Freening the e6-square for the knight and possibly the king. Here or later, it probably made sense to include 31...a6 32 a4 in order to reduce the number of pawns, but that might not change too much.

\[ \text{32 } \textit{Ee}3 \]

The immediate 32 b5 was also possible, but activating the king is rarely wrong in the endgame.

\[ \text{32...}\textit{Ef}6? \]

This lets White realize his pawn majority by tactical means. A lesser evil was 32...\textit{Ef}8 33 b5 \textit{Ee}8, trying a different route for the king, although after 34 c6 bxc6 35 bxc6 \textit{Ee}6 36 f5 \textit{Cc}7 37 \textit{Ad}4 Black’s task remains very difficult.

\[ \text{33 b}5! \textit{Ee}5 \]

Desperation, but the intended 33...\textit{Ee}6 failed to 34 c6, when both 34...bxc6 35 bxc6 \textit{Ad}6 36 \textit{Bb}5+! and 34...\textit{Ed}6 35 b6! axb6 36 \textit{Bb}5+ win for White – Smyslov.
34 \( \text{Be}4+ \) \( \text{Be}6 \) 35 \( \text{c}6! \)

The double threat of 36 \( \text{c}7 \) and 36 \( \text{Cc}5+ \) is more than Black can take.

\[ \text{35...exf4+ 36 xfx4 bxc6 37 c5+ d6 38 xb3 cxb5 39 h4} \]

White soon realized his extra piece.

Now let's see a complete game where White, at an early stage, heads for a battle with a queenside pawn majority.

**Example 137**

**S.Erenburg-A.Murariu**

Las Palmas 2003

**Sicilian Defence (B22)**

1 e4 c5 2 c3

The Sicilian Alapin is one of the openings that often produces a pawn majority on the queenside.

2...d5 3 exd5 \( \text{Wxd5} \) 4 d4 \( \text{f6} \) 5 \( \text{f3} \) e6 6 \( \text{e3} \)

A modern continuation, which puts some immediate pressure on the \( \text{c}5 \)-pawn. Other frequent options are 6 \( \text{d}3 \) and 6 \( \text{e}2 \).

6...\( \text{bd7} \)

More common is 6...cxd4; for example, 7 cxd4 \( \text{b}4+ \) 8 \( \text{c3} \) 0-0 9 \( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 10 0-0 \( \text{xc}3 \)

11 \( \text{bxc3} \) \( \text{a}6 \) with a complex battle.

7 \( \text{c4} \)

White desists from a structure with an isolated queen's pawn and takes the first step to a future pawn majority.

7...\( \text{wd6} \) 8 \( \text{c3} \) a6

Avoiding a knight jump to b5. The alternative is 8...cxd4 9 \( \text{xd4} \) a6, avoiding the kind of play that now arises in the game.

9 \( \text{dxc5}! \)

White obliges the opponent to put a piece on c5, in order to achieve b2-b4 with tempo later on.

9...\( \text{xd1+} \)

After 9...\( \text{xc5?} \) 10 \( \text{xd6} \) \( \text{xd6} \) 11 \( \text{b4!} \) \( \text{ce4} \) 12 \( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 13 \( \text{c5!} \), followed by \( \text{d}3 \), White's pawn majority is already a main factor in the battle.

10 \( \text{xd1} \) \( \text{xc5} \) 11 \( \text{xc5} \) \( \text{xc5} \) 12 \( \text{b4!} \)

White takes the opportunity to advance his pawn majority. In contrast, 12 \( \text{e}2?! \) \( \text{e}7 \) 13 0-0 \( \text{b}6 \) 14 \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{b}7 \) 15 \( \text{fd}1 \) \( \text{d}8 \) led to a rather equal game in V.Parfenov-A.Eliseev, Moscow 2001.

12...\( \text{fe4?!} \)

This entangles Black's development. Correct was 12...\( \text{ce4} \) 13 \( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 14 \( \text{d}4! \) \( \text{f}6 \) 15 \( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{e}7 \) with just a slight disadvantage.

13 \( \text{b1} \)
An excellent move, related to the concept of “the superfluous piece” investigated by Mark Dvoretsky. Now both black knights are soon forced to less active squares.

13...a4?!  
Tempting at first sight, but the knight isn’t well placed there in the long run. Preferable was 13...d7 14 d3 d6 followed by ...b7-b6, ...b7 and ...e7. If White tries to avoid this by 15 c5?!, then after 15...a5! 16 a3 axb4 17 axb4 d5 the b4-pawn gets into trouble.

14 d4!  
The best way of dislodging the knight, since 14 d3 runs into 14...d6! intending ...a7-a5 with counterplay.

14...f6 15 e2

15...e7  
Obviously 15...0-0? would move away the king from the main battlefield, the queenside. White applies the same logic on his next move.

16 d2! a5  
Pawn exchanges usually favour the defender, besides which he now manages to activate the rook on a8.

17 a3 axb4 18 axb4 d8

Or 18...b6 19 e5 b7 20 f3 preparing c2-b3 in order to intimidate the knight on a4.

Black finally admits the problem with the misplaced knight on a4. Unfortunately, on b6 it obstructs the development of his bishop.

21 c3 e7 22 d1 g4  
Not very constructive, but after 22...d7 23 e5 e8 24 f3 White is also better.

23 h3!  
Erenburg avoids 23 c5? d5! 24 xd5+ exd5 25 xd5 a2+ with strong counterplay. Now the knight has to retreat in view of 23...xf2? 24 f1.

23...f6 24 b3 h6 25 e5!  
Activating the knight and enabling f3. The latter explains why the bishop went to e2 and not d3 on the 15th move.

25...bd7 26 xd7 xd7

27 b5!  
A key move, that doesn’t just advance the pawn majority, but also restricts the enemy bishop. The fact that White fixes his pawns on squares of the “wrong” colour and also cedes the c5-square isn’t a big deal, since Black lacks space for exploiting this. In contrast, both 27 c5?! c6 28 f3 d5 29 b5 xc3 30 xc3 d5 and 27 f3 c6! 28 xc6 bxc6 lead to a smaller advantage than in the game.

27...b6?
Rather natural, but now this pawn turns into a weakness. Correct was 27...\textit{d}8 28 \textit{f}3 \textit{c}8, when 29 \textit{x}d8 \textit{x}d8 30 c5 produces a clear, but not decisive advantage – Erenburg.

\textbf{28 \textit{f}3 \textit{b}8}

After 28...\textit{a}7? 29 \textit{a}4 the problem with ...\textit{b}7-\textit{b}6 is well displayed. Thus Black has to surrender the a-file.

\textbf{29 \textit{a}1!}

This move comes with two strong ideas: seize the seventh rank by \textit{a}7, or attack the b6-pawn by \textit{a}6 and \textit{a}4.

\textbf{29...\textit{c}8}

Preparing ...\textit{d}7-c5.

\textbf{30 \textit{a}7+ \textit{d}7 31 \textit{c}6!}

Now White is ready to swap the defending knight at any moment.

\textbf{31...\textit{f}5}

Since the immediate 31...\textit{d}6 fails to 32 \textit{e}4+, Black prepares it.

\textbf{32 \textit{a}4 \textit{d}6 33 \textit{x}d7!}

Just at the right moment, before the knight escapes to e5.

\textbf{33...\textit{x}d7}

\textbf{34 \textit{b}4!}

Active king. Now the threat of 35 \textit{xb}6! \textit{xb}6 36 c5+ forces the black king to move away from the b6-pawn, and the rest is easy.

\textbf{34...\textit{e}7 35 \textit{a}6 e5 36 \textit{x}b6 \textit{d}8 37 \textit{b}7 \textit{f}6 38 \textit{c}5 \textit{e}8 39 \textit{c}7}

In view of b6-b7, Black resigned.

\textbf{Example 138}

\textbf{V.Spaso\-v-A.Dreev}

Moscow Olympiad 1994

Here is an example where the queenside pawn majority is realized in a slightly different way.

\textbf{16 a3!}

Preparing the plan of b2-b4, \textit{b}3 and c4-c5 in order to advance the queenside majority.

\textbf{16...\textit{b}6}

Dreew hurries to conclude his development. Obviously 16...a5?! permits 17 \textit{b}5, when the knight turns into a headache for Black. As for 16...\textit{e}5 17 \textit{b}3 f5?! advancing his own majority, after 18 c5! followed by \textit{c}4+, the king becomes exposed. The attempt to improve this line by 17...\textit{b}6 permits 18 c5!, when White gets in first on “his” flank; e.g. 18...\textit{xc}5 19 \textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5 20 \textit{wd}8 \textit{xd}8 21 \textit{xc}5 \textit{f}6 22 \textit{xf}8 \textit{xf}8 23 \textit{c}7! with a pleasant endgame advantage thanks to the active pieces and the weak a6-pawn.
17 b4 \textit{b7} 18 b3 \textit{bf6}

Improving the knight. After 18...\textit{c8} 19 c5 bxc5 20 \textit{x}c5! (fighting for the e5-square) 20...\textit{x}c5 21 bxc5 preparing 22 \textit{d}e5, the passed pawn yields a clear plus.

19 \textit{d}4

Spasov prepares \textit{f}3-e5 to soften up the dark squares in the enemy camp. The immediate 19 c5?! was also interesting.

19...a5?!

Initiating a counterattack. 19...\textit{c}8 20 \textit{e}e5 \textit{x}e5 21 \textit{x}xe5 \textit{d}d7 22 \textit{d}d6 leads to a slight edge for White. Dolmatov suggests 19...\textit{h}6?! intending 20 \textit{c}2 e5! and the pawn is untouchable; instead, 20 \textit{b}1?! followed by c4-c5 seems preferable, just like in the game.

20 c5!

A key move that converts the pawn majority into a passed pawn.

20...\textit{xc}5

In the event of 20...\textit{axb}4? White can choose between the simple 21 \textit{axb}4 and the riskier 21 c6?! \textit{xc}6 22 \textit{xc}6 \textit{bxa}3 23 \textit{wa}1, in both cases with a slight advantage – Spasov.

21 \textit{bxc}5 a4!

The immediate 21...\textit{c}6?! runs into 22 \textit{d}e5 \textit{xe}5 23 \textit{xe}5 \textit{d}5 24 \textit{d}4 with strong pressure. For this reason Dreev first deflects the knight from d4.

22 \textit{bd}2 \textit{c}6 23 \textit{e}5!

Simplification will make this passed pawn stronger.

23...\textit{xe}5 24 \textit{xe}5 \textit{d}7

24...\textit{a}5? loses material to 25 \textit{c}4!, while after 24...\textit{d}5?! 25 \textit{e}4 the weak squares on d6 and f6 are clearly felt.

25 \textit{d}6!

In the same spirit as the 23rd move.

25...\textit{x}d6?

Black underestimates the ensuing passed pawn on d6. 25...\textit{g}7! was clearly preferable, avoiding the exchanges and keeping the pawn at c4. After 26 \textit{b}1 or 26 \textit{c}4 White keeps a slight edge, but nothing more.
26 cxd6 e5 27 e4!

Creating the threat of 28 b5. The immediate 27 b5?! permitted 27...g5! 28 g3 e6d8 with counterplay – Spasov.

27...e6

Giving up the blockade of the passed pawn, but Black was short of alternatives; e.g. 27...w6 28 c7!? intending 28...w8d8? 29 wxe7+ wxe7 30 f6+.

28 wxe6+ wxe6

Or 34 wxd7 35 wxd7 wxd7 36 c1 and the rook enters sooner or later with decisive effect.

35 b1 w6

If 35...b3 then 36 w6f6! followed by a timely c1.

36 b4 c6?

A tactical slip in a desperate position.

37 xa4 wc5 38 b8!

Black resigned.

How to fight against a queenside pawn majority? One idea is to create activity on the other flank, for example by advancing one’s own majority, a topic that we will investigate after the next game. Another option is a minority attack in order to soften up the enemy majority, as in the following example.

Example 139
V.Ivanchuk-S.Karjakin
Wijk aan Zee 2006

29 d7?!

A natural advance, but 29 a4!, challenging the blocker on d5 first, was more technical; for example, 29...ed8 30 xd5 exd5 31 wxd5 e6! 32 d7 ed6 33 e8+ g7 34 wxd6! wxd6 35 wxd8 w7! 36 dc8 wxd7 37 ec4!, followed by h2-h4, with good chances for victory.

29...ed8 30 c7 wb2?!

While 30...w7? failed to 31 wxd5, correct was 30...w4! heading for d6; e.g. 31 wc1 wd6 32 b5 xg2! snatching a pawn, with unclear play.

31 wb1 wb6?!

31...wc1 32 exc1 w8 33 b5 w7 was a lesser evil, with a difficult, though far from lost endgame. In the game the presence of queens inhibits the king transfer to e7.

32 wf4 ea7 33 xa7 wxa7 34 b5 wa5

White is slightly better thanks to his bishop pair. Ivanchuk’s following play is a model example of how to neutralize a pawn majority.

17 e3 hc8

After 17...b6?! 18 b4! cxb4 19 axb4 hc8
20 b5! one pawn stops two with a clear advantage – Ivanchuk.
18 f3

A useful move that reinforces the e4-pawn and enables \( \text{f2} \). In contrast, 18 b4?! is less suitable here due to 18...c4! creating a passed pawn. Advancing the kingside majority by 18 f4?! is equally flawed due to 18...\( \text{c6} \) 19 \( \text{f3} \) f5! with counterplay.

18...\( \text{e6} \)

If 18...b5, then 19 0-0-0! \( \text{c7} \) 20 \( \text{d6} \) is very strong – Ivanchuk. There can follow 20...c4 21 \( \text{hd1} \) \( \text{c6} \) 22 g4?!, preparing h2-h4 and g4-g5 with a new front.

19 \( \text{c1} \) b6

After 19...c4 20 \( \text{f2} \) b5 21 \( \text{hd1} \) White gets the upper hand; e.g., 21...a5?! 22 f4! f5 23 \( \text{f3} \), when 23...\( \text{ab8} \) fails to 24 exf5 \( \text{xf5} \) 25 \( \text{a7} \).

20 \( \text{a6}! \) \( \text{d8} \)

21 b4!

After expelling the rook from the c-file, White launches a minority attack in order to eliminate the potential passed pawn and clear lines towards the black queenside.

21...\( \text{xb4} \) 22 \( \text{xb4} \) \( \text{c8} \) 23 \( \text{e2} \)

Keeping the powerful bishop pair.

23...\( \text{e6} \) 24 \( \text{f2} \)

Also tempting is 24 b5?!?, fixing the black pawns, but Ivanchuk is not in a hurry.

24...\( \text{ac8} \) 25 \( \text{a1}! \)

Exploiting the semi-open file that was created by b2-b4.

25...\( \text{c6}?! \)

Surprisingly, this leads to a loss of a pawn almost by force. 25...\( \text{d7} \) was a lesser evil, when 26 \( \text{hc1}! \) \( \text{dc7} \) 27 \( \text{xc7!} \) \( \text{xc7} \) 28 \( \text{f4} \) \( \text{c2} \) 29 \( \text{e3} \) yields White a clear advantage – Ivanchuk.

26 \( \text{a6}! \)

Again this pinprick in order to stir up the black defence. Now 26...\( \text{c7} \)? fails to 27 \( \text{hc1} \) \( \text{dd7} \) 28 \( \text{b5} \) etc.

26...\( \text{b8} \) 27 \( \text{b5}! \)

The trade of the b4-pawn for the one on a7 will have a weakening effect on the remaining pawn on b6.

27...\( \text{xb4} \)

If 27...\( \text{bc8} \) or 27...\( \text{dc8} \), then 28 \( \text{hc1} \) with similar play.

28 \( \text{xa7+} \) \( \text{g8} \) 29 \( \text{e7}! \)

Preparing \( \text{a1-a7} \), a threat that soon forces Karjakin to give up the b6-pawn.

29...\( \text{f7} \) 30 \( \text{a1} \) \( \text{a8} \) 31 \( \text{d7}! \)

Improving the rook before taking the pawn. Less technical was 31 \( \text{xa8?!} \) \( \text{xa8} \) 32 \( \text{xb6} \) \( \text{b8} \) 33 \( \text{d7} \) \( \text{xb6} \) 34 \( \text{d8+} \) \( \text{e8} \) 35 \( \text{xe8} \) \( \text{f8} \) with more chances of survival than in the game.

31...\( \text{xc8} \)

Or 31...\( \text{e6} \) 32 \( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{xa8} \) 33 \( \text{d6}! \) \( \text{f7} \) 34 \( \text{xb6} \) with a similar game.

32 \( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{xa8} \) 33 \( \text{xb6} \)

Now in the event of 33...\( \text{b8} \) White has the reply 34 \( \text{d6} \). Ivanchuk later realized his extra pawn.

Now let's move over to pawn majorities on the kingside. The advance of a kingside majority can have several positive effects, such as an attack on the opponent's king (given that he has castled short), the creation of a passed pawn, or simply increased
central control. The following example shows the kingside pawn majority in an attacking context.

**Example 140**

_S.Gligoric-P.Benko_

_Budapest 1948_

```
21 e4!

The pawn majority starts moving. Now 21...dxe4 22 fx e4 would just give Benko additional worries along the f-file, so he prefers to keep the position closed.

21...\_b7 22 e5 \_d7 23 f4!

With the strong threat of 24 f5. Black has only one reply.

23...f5 24 \_f1!

Clearing the way for the g-pawn. As we will see, Black won’t be able to maintain the kingside blockade. Had this been the case, then 24 exf6 followed by f4-f5 would have been worth considering.

24...b5

Initiating counterplay on the queenside, but it is too late. Also after 24...\_c6 25 \_e3 \_e7 26 a4!, followed by \_a3 and \_f3, White exerts strong pressure.

25 \_e3 \_b6 26 g4! fxg4

The alternative try 26...\_f8 seems more tenacious, although after the reply 27 \_f3 \_h8 28 \_g2 Black’s task remains very difficult.

27 \_xg4 \_f8 28 \_f6+ \_h8

Here or later, an exchange sacrifice on f6 has the drawback of letting the white rooks enter along the e-file.

29 \_g2!

Tying Black’s pieces to the defence of the d5-pawn. After 29 f5 gxf5 30 \_xf5 \_f7 he would have more chances of survival – Gligoric.

29...\_c6

Benko prepares ...\_e7-f5, exploiting the fact that 30 \_xd5? fails to 30...\_xd4.

30 \_h3! \_d8

Black can’t complete his plan, since 30...\_f7 runs into 31 \_xh7! – Gligoric.

31 \_c1!
```

The last piece joins the attack with decisive effect.

31...\_c8 32 \_h1 \_a6 33 f5! gxf5 34 \_h6

Black lost on time, but after the continuation 34...\_f7 35 \_g1 \_e7 36 \_eg2 the game is over anyway.
Example 141
J.Hellsten-G.Soppe
Pinamar 2004

Another opening line that frequently produces a kingside pawn majority is the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit. In the position above, White already initiated the plan of f2-f3 and e3-e4 in order to advance his majority. Black, on the other hand, intends a counter-strike with ...c6-c5, prepared by ...c8.

14...exf6!

A simple, but strong solution. White gives up the bishop pair in order to enable the advance of his kingside pawns. The immediate 14 e4 was less convincing due to 14...dxe4 15 fxe4 d5!, when both 16 e5 dxe5 17 dxe5 c5! and 16 c4 c5! yield Black counterplay on the dark squares.

14...exf6 15 e4 c5

After 15...dxe4 16. fxe4 dxe4 17 cxd4 wxd4 18 cxb5, followed by a4-b3, White is a bit better thanks to his healthier pawn structure - Soppe. But the prophylactic 15...g6?! was interesting. Then White should avoid 16 e5?! e5 17 f4 f5! with a successful blockade of the majority. 16 f4!, preparing f4-f5, seems preferable; for ex-

176 ample, 16...dxe4 17 dxe4 g7 18 f5! with an initiative.

16 e5!

Getting on with the plan.

16...f7 17 f4 c5 18 dxc5 c5

After 18...xc5 19 a3 followed by d4, White is slightly better.

19 f5

Another good option was 19 e4! with a direct attack on the d5-pawn.

19...c7 20 b3 d4?

Black saves the pawn but also surrenders the e4-square. Preferable was 20...a8 21 d4 a7 22 c2 b4, followed by b6 and ...a5, with just a slight disadvantage.

19 e4!

A key move, neutralizing the bishop on b7 and clearing the way for the f-pawn.

21...dxe6 22 cxb7 xb7

23 f5!

Resuming the advance of the pawn majority. Also interesting was 23 e4 e7 24 f5 c5 25 dxc5 c5 26 e6! fxe6 27 d4!, followed by dx e6, with an improved version of the game.

23...g5 24 e6!

White avoids the trick 24 h4? e4! 25 cxe4 wh4+ and creates an advanced passed pawn that will make the black king feel uneasy.
24...fxe6 25 Qf4

The knight exploits the active f4-square that was just vacated by the f-pawn.

25...h8

In the event of 25...Wb8 unpinning the d4-pawn, White has 26 Qxe6 Qxe6 27 Qe4! Wb5 28 Qg5! Wh8 29 Qxe6 with a strong initiative thanks to the powerful knight.

26 Qxe6 Qxe6 27 fx6 Wh4

Thus Black prevents a knight move to e4, though only for a moment. In the event of 27...Bb7 28 e4 Bb6 29 g5 White enjoys excellent attacking prospects.

28 Wd5 Bb8 29 e4

A natural move in order to activate the knight. The straightforward 29 Wxc5 dxc3 30 bxc3 We7 31 Bd6! was also strong.

29...Bd8

30 We5!

White again exploits the squares that have been vacated by his pawn advances, thus securing a central position for his queen. Now that 30...Qa7? 31 Bd6 would be disastrous for Black, he has to give up the d4-pawn.

30...Qe7 31 Bxd4 Bxd4 32 Wxd4 h6 33 We5!

The queen returns to its preferred square.

33...f8?

A bad idea, since the absence of rooks will leave the back rank vulnerable. The last chance was 33...Wg4 34 h3 Wg6, touching the e6-pawn, although after 35 Bc1! followed by Bc6, White is winning in the long run.

34 Bxf8+ Bxf8 35 g3 We7

Or 35...Wg4 36 e7 Wd1+ 37 Qg2, when both 37...We2+ 38 Qf2! and 37...Qxe7 38 Wxe7 We2+ 39 Qh3 Wh5+ 40 Wh4 lead to a win. In the game the knight is decisively regrouped to d5.

36 Bc3! Bb4

After 36...Wd6 37 Wxd6 Bxd6 38 Bd5 followed by Qg2-f3-e4, Black is helpless.

37 Bd5 Wc5?

A last slip in time trouble, but 37...Wc4 38 Qg2 Wc6 39 Qh3 was equally desperate for Black.

38 e7! Qxe7 39 Qxe7 Wf2 40 Wb8+

Black resigned.

The next example shows the advance of a kingside pawn majority as a way of gaining space and central control.

Example 142

P. San Segundo-V. Kramnik

Madrid 1993
Black is better, thanks to his bishop pair and more mobile pawn majority. However, a stereotypical move like 22...\textsf{Ad8}?! permits 23 \textsf{Be4}! neutralizing the bishop pair. Kramnik finds a much better option.

22...f5!

A power move that restricts the white bishop and enables a future kingside expansion by ...g7-g6 and ...e6-e5.

23 \textsf{Be1}

White prepares \textsf{De5} and vacates d1 for the other rook.

23...\textsf{f4}!

Forcing the white queen to a less active square before taking further action. Less convincing was 23...g6?! 24 \textsf{De5}! or 23...\textsf{Wc6} 24 \textsf{Ad1} g6 25 \textsf{Wg5}!, when 25...e5? fails to 26 \textsf{Axf5}.

24 \textsf{We2 Wc6}

Restricting the knight on f3. The immediate 24...g6 was also strong; e.g. 25 \textsf{De5 Ad8} 26 \textsf{Ad1} \textsf{Xd1} 27 \textsf{Xd1} \textsf{e4}! renewing the idea of ...e6-e5.

25 \textsf{Ad1}!

This natural move doesn’t do anything to stop Black’s plan. A lesser evil was 25 \textsf{Wf1} g6 26 \textsf{De5 Wc7} 27 \textsf{We2}, transposing to the previous note.

25...g6!

Simple and strong. Now White can’t stop ...e6-e5, so he tries to relieve the defence by a queen exchange.

26 \textsf{Wd3 e5} 27 \textsf{Wd5}+?

This produces a weak pawn on d5. Preferable was 27 \textsf{Wd7 e4} 28 \textsf{Wxc6} \textsf{xc6} 29 \textsf{Dd2}, intending \textsf{Df1}-e3, with a worse but not lost endgame – Kramnik.

27...\textsf{Wxd5} 28 \textsf{cxd5 e4} 29 \textsf{g3}

The only move, since 29 \textsf{Dh2}? \textsf{Ad8} drops the d5-pawn.

29...\textsf{h6}!

Kramnik avoids both 29...\textsf{exf3}?! 30 \textsf{Xxe8+ Xxe8} 31 \textsf{gxf4} with counterplay, and 29...\textsf{d6}?! 30 \textsf{Dd2}, when the knight reaches the strong c4-square since 30...\textsf{Ad5}?? loses a piece after 31 \textsf{Df1}. In contrast, after the text 30 \textsf{Dd2}\textsf{? Ad5} doesn’t work for White, so the knight is forced to a less active square.

30 \textsf{Dh4 Ad8} 31 d6

The pawn sacrifice 31 b4!? cxb4 32 d6 is well met by 32...\textsf{f8} preparing ...\textsf{e6}, e.g. 33 \textsf{Dc3} e3 34 \textsf{fxe3} \textsf{xe3} with a sound extra pawn.

31...\textsf{f8} 32 g4

32 d7 \textsf{De7} 33 g4! was a lesser evil; for example, 33...\textsf{exd7} 34 \textsf{gx5 De7} 35 \textsf{Xxd7 Xxd7} 36 \textsf{Dg2} \textsf{gxf5} 37 \textsf{De3} with more counterplay than in the game.

32...\textsf{c8}!

Black is not in a hurry to take the d6-pawn, and first secures his pawn structure.

33 \textsf{gxf5 gxf5} 34 \textsf{Ad5}

White can’t play 34 \textsf{f3}\? \textsf{Ad6} 35 \textsf{fxe4} due to 35...\textsf{Xg3}!.

34...\textsf{exd6} 35 \textsf{Xed1}

Or 35 \textsf{Xxc5} \textsf{Xh6}! 36 \textsf{Xxf5 Xg6}+ wins.

35...\textsf{Ad5} 36 \textsf{Xxd5 De6} 37 \textsf{Dd1 Dh7} 38 \textsf{Df1}!?

Too passive. 38 \textsf{Dg2}! was preferable, heading for f4; e.g. 38...\textsf{Xh6} 39 \textsf{Dd6 Dh6} 40 \textsf{Xc6 Xc8} 41 \textsf{Ma6} and Black still has to overcome some practical obstacles.
38...f6! 39 g2 e5

Now the black king is doing a great job supporting the pawn majority. Kramnik later realized his extra pawn.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 337.

**Pawn chains**

A common feature in some closed and semi-closed openings, such as the French and the King’s Indian, is the arrangement of both sides’ pawns in chains. Let’s see some examples on this topic.

**Example 143**

R.Vaganian-A.Plainec

Moscow 1975

When attacking a pawn chain it often makes sense to undermine its rear points, as in this simple example.

17 b5!

Vaganian starts a queenside attack with a focus on the c6-pawn, which sustains the rest of the black pawn chain.

17...e6

In contrast, Black is not even close to achieving a similar attack by ...f5-f4 at the opponent’s base on e3.

18 a5!

Preparing a5-a6 in order to split the black pawns. Less good is 18 bxc6?! bxc6 19 a6 b8.

18...g5

Plauniec ignores the enemy plan and prepares action on “his” flank. Instead, 18...cxb5? fails to 19 xb5 with double threats at a7 and d6, while after 18...a6?! 19 bxa6 bxa6 20 xa6 a8 21 b7 a5 22 b4 Black faces a difficult task due to the weak c6-pawn.

19 a6! bxa6 20 bxc6 a6 21 ab1

White’s powerful 19th didn’t just transform the c5-pawn into a passed pawn, it also left the d5-pawn without protection.

21...g4 22 hgx4

Avoiding 22 h4 g3! 23 fxg3 h6 with some counterplay towards the base of the white pawn chain at e3.

22...hxg4 23 g3! f5 24 g2

Now White can go h1 whenever needed. In contrast, Black can’t use his knight on f6 in the attack due to the problem with the d5-pawn.

24...f8 25 b7 e6 26 b8 h6

Or 26...d7 27 f4 with a welcome queen exchange.

27 h1 g5 28 h2 g7 29 bh1
Black’s kingside attack has been completely neutralized, whereas his queenside structure remains in ruins. Vaganian subsequently realized his advantage without any hurry: 29...\(\text{xe8} \) 30 \(\text{wxa7} \) \(\text{d8d7} \) 31 \(\text{wb7} \) \(\text{we6} \) 32 \(\text{wb3} \) \(\text{ab8} \) 33 \(\text{wa2} \) \(\text{f8} \) 34 \(\text{b1!} \) \(\text{e8} \) 35 \(\text{b7} \) \(\text{g6} \) 36 \(\text{wb3} \) \(\text{e7} \) 37 \(\text{b8!} \) \(\text{ec8} \) 38 \(\text{xc8} \) \(\text{xc8} \) 39 \(\text{h1} \) \(\text{wd7} \) 40 \(\text{wb8} \) \(\text{g6} \) 41 \(\text{wa8} \) \(\text{we6} \) 42 \(\text{b1} \) \(\text{e7} \) 43 \(\text{b6!} \) \(\text{d7} \) 44 \(\text{xc6} \) \(\text{xc6} \) 45 \(\text{xa6} \) and the extra pawn later took its toll.

Example 144
J.Timman-G.Kamsky
Tilburg 1990

In this typical position from the Caro-Kann White enjoys more space but Black has no tangible weaknesses. Kamsky now starts a long-term attack on the white pawn chain on d4-e5-f4.

18...c5!

Undermining the base on d4 before White consolidates by \(\text{e2} \) and c2-c3.

19 \(\text{b1} \)

Here and later, 19 \(\text{e2} \) is well met by 19...\(\text{b5} \), e.g. 20 dxc5 \(\text{xe2}! \) 21 \(\text{xe2} \) \(\text{xc5} \) when the knight seems a bit more active than the bishop. On the other hand, 19 dxc5 \(\text{xc5} \) just helps Black in improving his knight.

19...\(\text{b8} \) 20 a3 \(\text{b6} \)

Increasing the pressure on d4. Now the positional threat of 21...\(\text{cxd4} \) 22 \(\text{xd4} \) \(\text{xd4} \) 23 \(\text{xd4} \) \(\text{xh1} \) 24 \(\text{h1} \) \(\text{h8} \) forces White to release the tension.

21 dxc5 \(\text{xc5} \) 22 \(\text{d4} \) \(\text{c6} \)

Preparing ...\(\text{d7} \) in order to keep fighting for the dark squares in the centre.

23 \(\text{f3} \)

If 23 f5, attacking the black base on e6, then 23...\(\text{d7} \) 24 \(\text{f4} \) \(\text{xh1} \) 25 \(\text{xh1} \) d4! 26 \(\text{e4} \) \(\text{c7} \) with annoying pressure on the e5-pawn.

23...\(\text{d7} \) 24 \(\text{e2} \)

This natural move keeps both the d4-square and the h-file under control. Even so, we will soon see why White should have preferred 24 \(\text{xb6} \) \(\text{xb6} \) 25 g5! \(\text{c4} \) 26 \(\text{hxh8} \) \(\text{xh8} \) 27 \(\text{h1} \) with just a slight disadvantage.

24...\(\text{xd4} \) 25 \(\text{xd4} \)

25...g5!

A powerful blow that destroys the remainder of the white pawn chain and converts the e6-pawn into a passed pawn.

26 \(\text{fxg5} \) \(\text{xe5} \) 27 \(\text{he1} \)

Aware of the long-term inferiority of his position, Timman looks for counterplay.
27...\( \text{Qg6} \) 28 c4 \( \text{Hg8} \)
Preparing an attack on the weak g5-pawn.
29 \( \text{Ne3!} \)
Enabling a future check on b3.
29...\( \text{e7} \) 30 \( \text{Qxc6+ bxc6} \) 31 \( \text{cx}d5 \) \( \text{cx}d5 \) 32 \( \text{ac1} \) \( \text{Md7?!} \)
With 32...\( \text{ac8} \) 33 \( \text{b3+ a8} \) Black could have finished off the enemy attack.
33 \( \text{ae2} \) \( \text{Xg5} \) 34 \( \text{a6?} \)
Correct was 34 \( \text{b3+! b7} \) 35 \( \text{bc3 g8} \) 36 \( \text{a6 b6} \) 37 \( \text{ac7!} \) with sufficient counterplay for a draw – Kamsky.
34...\( \text{Ad6!} \)
Now Black is ready to meet 35 \( \text{b3+} \) by 35...\( \text{b6} \), thus neutralizing White's attack. The game continued 35 \( \text{ae2} \) \( \text{c6} \) 36 \( \text{f1} \) \( \text{g7} \) 37 \( \text{ef3} \) f5 38 gxf5 \( \text{Qxf5} \) 39 \( \text{ad3} \) \( \text{dd6} \) 40 \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{e7} \) 41 \( \text{fe1} \) \( \text{e8!} \) 42 \( \text{e5} \) \( \text{c7} \) 43 \( \text{f5} \) \( \text{c8} \) 44 \( \text{g4} \) \( \text{d7} \) 45 \( \text{g5} \) \( \text{d6} \) and Black later realized his extra pawn.

**Example 145**
J. Nunn-K. Bischoff
Hamburg 1984

In a French battle Black has just played ...\( \text{d7-b5} \) in order to swap his “bad” bishop. Nunn finds an excellent reply.

18 \( \text{Ne1!} \)
This retreat doesn’t just enable a recapture with the knight on d3, it also prepares f4-f5 with an attack on the black pawn chain.
18...\( \text{ac8} \) 19 \( \text{xc8 bxc8} \)

20 \( f4 \)
The strength of the f4-f5 plan is further emphasized by the location of the black king on f8. In the following, Bischoff tries to solve this problem by a king march to the other flank.
20...\( \text{dd7!} \) 21 \( g4 \)
21 f5!? \( \text{exf5} \) 22 g4 was a more straightforward option, when 22...\( \text{fxg4} \) fails to 23 e6.
21...\( \text{e8} \) 22 f5 \( \text{b6?!} \)
Preferable was 22...\( \text{d8} \), carrying on with the plan; e.g. 23 fxe6 \( \text{fxe6} \) 24 \( \text{f7} \) \( \text{g8} \) or 23 \( \text{g2 c7} \) 24 \( \text{f4} \) \( \text{f8} \) with just a slight disadvantage – Nunn.
23 \( \text{g2 xd3?} \)
This lets the white queen switch to the more promising b1-h7 diagonal, with access to the potential weakness on g6. 23...\( \text{f8} \) was correct, safeguarding f7 before resuming the king march.
24 \( \text{Wxd3} \) \( \text{g5} \)
If 24...\( \text{b5} \), then 25 \( \text{b1!} \) with the threat of 26 fxe6 fxe6 27 \( \text{g6+} \). With the text
Black gets ready to swap a potential knight on f4.

25 d3 c4 26 xg5 hxg5

Since 26...xb2 fails to 27 fxe6!, White manages to keep the bishop on the board, which will now help him in winning a pawn.

27 c1 b5 28 xg5 exf5

After 28...bxa3 29 f6 the h-pawn decides the game.

29 f4!

Initiating a final attack on the black king.

29...fxg4 30 e6 fxe6 31 xe1!

The natural 31 g6+?! permits 31...f7 32 xf7+ xf7 33 g6+ xe8 34 xh8 xd4 with complications, but 31 g6 g8 32 xe7 was also strong – Nunn.

31 c7 32 xe6! xe6 33 f5

In view of the conclusion 33...f7 34 xe6+ f8 35 e8+! xe8 36 wc8 mate, Black resigned.

The attack at the base of the opponent’s pawn chain isn’t necessarily associated to the creation of a weak pawn. Often the goal is less specific: to open a new front, create activity, etc, just like Nunn’s f4-f5 in the previous example. The following example is a similar case.

Example 146
V.Zvjaginsev-J.Polgar
FIDE World Championship,
Las Vegas 1999

In this position from the Petrosian Variation of the King’s Indian, White is slowly preparing a queenside advance by b2-b3, a2-a3 and b3-b4, while Black aims at creating activity on the other flank.

11 h6

Clearing a retreat square for the knight as a preparation for ...f7-f5.

12 e3

After 12 h4 h7 Black can consider the additional plan of ...h7-h5 and ...h6, improving the fianchettoed bishop before taking further action.

12 h7 13 b3

The immediate 13 a3 is interesting as well, since 13...a4 permits 14 b5! with an attack on the a4-pawn.

13 f5

A key move in the King’s Indian. Black gains space and prepares future actions on the kingside.

14 f3

If 14 exf5, then 14...gx5, taking the e4-square from the white pieces with ...f6
and ...\textit{Wg6} as a possible follow-up.

\textbf{14...\textit{Qf6}}

When attacking pawn chains there often appears a choice whether to capture at the opponent’s base or advance the attacking pawn one step further. In this particular case, the first option with 14...\textit{fxe4}?! makes little sense after 15 \textit{Qdxe4}, when the e4-square turns into a strong base for the white pieces. On the other hand, 14...\textit{f4} 15 \textit{Qf2} \textit{g5}, preparing an attack on the “new” base on \textit{f3}, deserves attention, and this is indeed a typical plan in the King’s Indian. There can follow 16 a3 \textit{Qf6} 17 b4 \textit{axb4} 18 \textit{axb4} when both 18...\textit{b6} 19 \textit{Qb5}!, intending \textit{Ha1} with an indirect attack on \textit{c7}, and 18...\textit{h5} 19 \textit{c5} \textit{g4} 20 \textit{cxd6} \textit{cx6} 21 \textit{Qc4}, with double threats at \textit{d6} and \textit{b6}, seem to favour White. In conclusion, neither 14...\textit{fxe4} nor 14...\textit{f4} is fully satisfactory at this moment, so Polgar’s flexible 14...\textit{Qf6} is more reasonable, saving either of these options for a more suitable occasion.

\textbf{15 a3 \textit{Qc5}}

Improving the knight before it is restricted by \textit{b3-b4}.

\textbf{16 b4 \textit{axb4} 17 \textit{axb4} \textit{Qa4}}

White is now considerably closer to the desired \textit{c4-c5} advance, at the cost of some black counterplay along the \textit{a}-file.

\textbf{18 \textit{Qxa4}}

After 18 \textit{Wc2} \textit{Qxc3} 19 \textit{Wxc3}, both 19...\textit{f4} 20 \textit{Qf2} \textit{g5} and 19...\textit{Qh5}?! 20 \textit{Qf1} \textit{g5} lead to black counterplay – Huzman.

\textbf{18...\textit{Qxa4} 19 \textit{c5} \textit{Qb5}!}

Black avoids the trick 20 \textit{c6} and again exploits the space vacated by the opponent’s pawn moves in order to improve his pieces. Actually Bischoff applied a similar idea by ...\textit{Qe7-g5} in the previous game.

\textbf{20 \textit{Qe1}?!}

This lets Black take the initiative by his next strong move. 20 \textit{Qc4}! was preferable, when both 20...\textit{a3} 21 \textit{We2} and 20...\textit{Qxc4} 21 \textit{Qxc4} \textit{fxe4} 22 \textit{cxd6} favour White. Thus Black should in turn prefer 20...\textit{fxe4} 21 \textit{fxe4} \textit{Qxc4} 22 \textit{Qxc4} \textit{Qxe4}, when 23 \textit{Qd3} \textit{Qf6} 24 \textit{cxd6} \textit{cx6} 25 \textit{Qxd6} \textit{Wd7} 26 \textit{Qe4} leads to a slight advantage – Huzman. Interestingly, in this variation both pawn chains were reduced to one single isolated pawn.

\textbf{20...\textit{a3}! 21 \textit{Qxb5} \textit{Wxb5} 22 \textit{We2}}

Renewing the idea of 23 \textit{Qc4}, which forces Black to swap queens.

\textbf{22...\textit{Wxe2} 23 \textit{Wxe2} \textit{fxe4}!}

Finally Polgar goes for the first option outlined in the comment to the 14th move, in order to intensify her kingside initiative. This is a good moment for the capture on

\textbf{183}
e4, since White can’t reply 24 ∅xe4? due to 24... ∅xd5.

**24 fxe4 ∅g4 25 ∅e1**

Black also keeps the initiative after 25 ∅b3 ∅xe3 26 ∅xe3 ∅a2! or 25 ∅f2 ∅a2 26 ∅g3 h5!, preparing ...h6 – Huzman.

29...h6 30 h3 ∅e3 31 ∅fe1?!

Relatively better was 31 ∅f6 ∅a1+ 32 ∅h2 ∅c2 33 ∅xg6+ ∅h7 34 ∅xh6+! ∅h6 35 ∅xe3 ∅xd2 with a difficult, though not yet lost endgame.

31...c2 32 ∅c1 ∅g7

Enabling a future ...d4, if necessary. Anyway, with White completely tied up, the position plays itself.

33 ∅h1 h4! 34 ∅f1 ∅f4 35 ∅f3 g5 36 ∅d8?!

The more sober 36 ∅b1 can be answered in the same way.

25...∅a4!

A precise move that emphasizes White’s main problems in this part of the game: his queenside pawns have become vulnerable, and the original plan of attacking the base on d6 is no longer realistic. We saw a few similar cases of a space advantage turning into a liability in Stolz-Hellsten and Miles-Byrne (the 29...d8 subline).

**26 cxd6 cxd6 27 ∅b6**

27 ∅c4 ∅xb4 28 ∅xd6? fails tactically to 28...∅xe3 29 ∅xe3 ∅d8, while after 27 b5 ∅c8 Black enjoys a strong initiative.

27...∅c8!

Polgar avoids 27...∅xb4? 28 ∅c7 ∅f6? 29 h3 and prefers to bring her second rook into the queenside attack.

28 ∅a5 h5

It transpires that the “bad” bishop has an excellent future on h6.

**29 ∅f1**

This doesn’t seem very constructive, but after 29 ∅f3 h6 30 h3 ∅f6 White’s position is also unpleasant.

36...∅d4! 37 ∅xd4 exd4

This passed pawn is decisive.

38 ∅b6 ∅xb4 39 ∅a5 d3! 40 ∅xb4 dxe2

41 ∅e1 ∅c4 0-1

In view of 42...∅xe4 and 43...h3.
The attack on the opponent’s pawn chain can also be directed at its front, an idea that we have already come across in Sasikiran-Iljushin (f2-f3) and Kamsky-Kasparov (...c7-c6). Here is one more example on this topic.

**Example 147**

**A.Kunte-L.Ravi**  
Indian Championship,  
Mumbai 2000  
**Caro-Kann Defence (B10)**

1 e4 c6 2 d3  
White avoids 2 d4 with a mainstream Caro-Kann, and instead sets up a King’s Indian Attack.

2...d5 3 d2 e5 4 d3 d7 5 g3 d6 6 g2 d6 7 0-0 0-0

8 b3  
8 e1 e8 9 c3 is a more frequent continuation. In the game White hurries to deploy his bishop on the long diagonal in order to put pressure on the e5-pawn. If Black later tries to restrict this bishop by ...d5-d4 and ...c6-c5, then he will have lost a few tempi compared to a normal King’s Indian with reversed colours.

8...e8 9 b2 c7

The immediate 9...d4 is well met by 10 h4!, preparing f2-f4, in the same spirit of Polgar’s ...f7-f5 in the previous example. There can follow 10...c7 11 c4 f8 12 f4 c5 13 a4! (reinforcing the knight on c4) 13...exf4 14 gxf4 b6 15 h3 (preventing d4-e3) 15...xc4 16 xc4 g6 17 c1 g7 18 f3 f7 19 f2 d7 20 d2 d8 21 eae1 d7 22 f5! with an initiative in K.Rathnakaran-Pr.Roy, New Delhi 2009.

10 e1 d4

Black finally resorts to this advance, which gains some space and restricts the bishop on b2. In contrast, 10...dxe4 11 dxe4, followed by d4 or f1-e3-f5, should yield White a slight advantage, while the flexible 10...f8 permits 11 exd5 cxd5 12 c4! with some initiative, e.g. 12...d4 13 c5! followed by 14 c1 and d4.

11 c3!  
With the rook on e1 and the black queen on c7 the plan with f2-f4 becomes less feasible, so White prefers to attack the black pawn chain at its front.

11...dxc3

After 11...c5 12 c1 Black probably has to capture on c3 anyway, with a transposition to the game.

12 xc3 c5

As a result of the c2-c3 advance Black
gained a protected square on d4, but with the knight on d7 it is not easy for him to exploit it. On the other hand, the clearance of the c-file and the a1-h8 diagonal will soon prove useful to White.

**13...\texttt{c1 d8}**

An understandable retreat in order to avoid d3-d4 or b3-b4, but 13...b5, taking the c4-square from the knight, was probably a better choice.

**14...\texttt{c4 c7 15 a4 a5?!}**

This merely helps secure the white knight on c4, where it will tie its colleague on d7 to the defence of the e5-pawn for the rest of the game. 15...b6 was a lesser evil, with a remote hope of a7-a6 and b6-b5.

**16...\texttt{d2!}**

Heading for b2 to step up the pressure.

**16...\texttt{a6 17 b2 e7 18 d3 c6 19 f5 d8 20 d2!}**

The other knight “inherits” c4 and clears the way for a future f2-f4 advance.

**20...g6**

The further course of the game suggests that Black does better without this natural move, perhaps by 20...\texttt{f8 21 c4 g6}. 21...\texttt{e3 f8 22 d4 d7 23 d5 b6} 24...\texttt{f6}**

If 24...\texttt{xf4 25 gxf4 e6}, trying to relieve the tension by ...\texttt{d4}, then 26 \texttt{f6!} and White wins material.

**25 f1 b8 26 f2 b7 27 c1 xf4**

A positional surrender, but the pressure on Black’s position was unbearable. White could even increase it by \texttt{h3}, if needed.

**28 xf4 f5 29 h8!**

A decisive blow that helps secure the f6-square.

**29...e6 30 exe5 \texttt{xf5 31 f6! c8 32 f3}**

More pieces join the attack.

**32...d4 33 g2+ d8 34 xd4 cxd4 35 b4**

In this desperate position, Black resigned.

**Example 148**

J. Hellsten-I. Nikoloiotsos

Athens 2002

The following position shows a different kind of pawn chain, with double fronts (c5 and e5) on Black’s side, and double bases (c4 and e4) on White’s side, so to speak. In such a structure, both players are typically aiming at a pawn breakthrough on the b-file or the f-file.
15 h3!
Before taking concrete action it makes sense to rule out ...d6-g4 or ...c8-g4, since any piece exchange would make Black’s position a little less cramped.

15...e7 16 d1
White slowly prepares the key advance f2-f4, which would be premature at this point due to the pressure on e4.

21 ef2 de8, followed by ...d6, the latter has no major problems.

20...c8 21 h4
Another good option was 21 g3 d7 22 b5 a6 23 a7 b7 24 a4! followed by c6.

21...a6
At this point Black isn’t really preparing ...b6-b5 anymore, but simply aims to avoid d3-b5 whenever the queen moves out of the pin on the h4-d8 diagonal.

22 a4
Neither is White trying to stop ...b6-b5, but rather intends a4-a5 to soften up the c5-pawn.

22...d6 23 f2!
Eyeing both the c5 and f7 pawns.

23...b7
The optimistic 23...g5 24 g3 h4 25 h2 f8, preparing ...g6-f4, fails to 26 a5! b5 27 b4!, when both 27...xb4 28 c5 and 27...bxc4 28 bxc5 are fatal for Black.

16...d7?!
This leaves the knight on f6 without its preferred retreat square. 16...a6 was preferable, when White can consider both the restrictive 17 a4 and the more ambitious 17 a3?!, preparing b2-b4.

17 d1 ab8
Black is just one move from achieving b7-b5, but White gets in first on “his” flank.

18 f4! b6
Settling for an inferior pawn structure. After 18...exf4? 19 xf4 Black can’t stop a crushing 20 e5 on the next move. In contrast, had he refrained from 16...d7 two moves ago, then 19...d7! would be possible at this moment, heading for the blocking square on e5.

24 a5!
Softening up the remainder of Black’s pawn chain.

24...bxa5 25 a4 f8 26 c6
Before taking the c5-pawn White improves his pieces. The immediate 26 xc5?! permits 26...c7 27 c6 g5! 28 g3 h4 29 h2 g4! with unnecessary counterplay.
26...\(\text{Nb3}\) 27 \(\text{He2}\) \(\text{Qd7}\) 28 \(\text{Nxd7}\) \(\text{Qxd7}\) 29 \(\text{Qxc5}\)

Now the connected passed pawns are decisive. The game continued 29...\(\text{Nb4}\) 30 \(\text{Qxd7}\) \(\text{Wxd7}\) 31 c5 f5 32 c6 \(\text{Wd6}\) 33 \(\text{Wxa7}\)! (with the double threat of \(\text{e7}\) and \(\text{f2-c5}\)) 33...\(\text{Qf7}\) 34 \(\text{Wxa6}\) g5 35 \(\text{f2}\) \(\text{fxe4}\) 36 \(\text{Wxa5}\) \(\text{Wb8}\) 37 \(\text{Qxe4}\) and White soon won.

**Example 149**

**M. Gurevich-J. Piket**

Wijk aan Zee 2002

Here is a more complex example featuring a similar pawn structure. In the coming middlegame battle it is far from clear who is going to advance on which flank, and when!

10 a4?!

Thus White prevents \(...b7-b5\) but also harms the future plan of b2-b4, since after the subsequent \(...c5xb4\) he won't have the response a3xb4 at his disposal, thus Black gains a stronghold on c5.

More flexible was 10 0-0, when the aggressive 10...\(b5?!\) backfires after 11 \(\text{cx b5}\) \(\text{axb5}\) 12 \(\text{Qxb5}\) \(\text{Qxe4}\) 13 \(\text{Qa7}\)! – Piket. More balanced continuations are 10...\(\text{Qh5}\) 11 \(\text{Qe1}\) \(\text{Qf4}\) 12 \(\text{Qf1}\), followed by g2-g3, or

10...\(\text{Qe8}\) 11 b4 b6 12 \(\text{Qb1}\), in both cases with a slight white advantage.

10...\(\text{g5}\)

Black takes some initial actions on the kingside, with focus on the f4-square.

11 \(\text{Qe2}\)

After 11 \(\text{g4?!}\) \(\text{Qf4}\) 12 \(\text{Qxf4}\) \(\text{exf4}\) 13 \(\text{Wd2}\) \(\text{Qf6}\) 14 \(\text{Wxf4}\) \(\text{Qe5}\) Black gets excellent compensation for the pawn.

11...\(\text{g6}\) 12 \(\text{g4}\)

Gaining some space and complicating the \(...f7-f5\) breakthrough. On the other hand, White’s own f2-f4 advance becomes less feasible.

12...\(\text{Qg7}\) 13 \(\text{Qh6}\) \(\text{Qf6}\)

In a cramped position like this one, the search for harmony between one’s pieces is essential. Here the knight is heading for g8 or e8-c7, whereas the d7-square is better exploited by the bishop.

14 \(\text{Qg3}\) \(\text{Qh8}\) 15 \(\text{Wc2}\)

After the alternative 15 \(\text{We2}\) \(\text{Qd7}\) followed by 16...\(\text{We8}\), the \(...b7-b5\) advance is also inevitable.

15...\(\text{Qd7}\)

In the absence of a knight on c3, White is unable to stop the liberating \(...b7-b5\) advance.

16 a5 b5!

A first sign that Black is doing well.

17 axb6 \(\text{Wxb6}\) 18 \(\text{Qa2}\) a5!

Grabbing some more space before White manages to play \(\text{Qd2-a5}\).

19 \(\text{Qd2}\) a4 20 \(\text{Qc3}\) \(\text{Qg8}\)!

Now that several white pieces are busy on the queenside, Black slowly prepares \(...f7-f5\).

21 \(\text{Qa3}\)

Ruling out \(\text{Wb3}\), but Black might not have been interested in a queen exchange anyway, considering the uncertain destiny of White’s king.

21...\(\text{b7}\) 22 \(\text{Qf1}\) \(\text{Qd8}\) 23 \(\text{Qg2}\) \(\text{Wc7}\) 24 \(\text{Wd2}\)
24...f5!

After several preparatory moves Black finally unleashes this key breakthrough, one that will generate great activity on the kingside.

25 exf5 gxf5 26 â€¢c2

Gurevich wisely desists from 26 gxf5?! â€¢xf5 27 â€¢xf5 â€¢xf5 28 â€¢xa4 â€¢g7, followed by â€¢b7f7, with strong counterplay – Stohl. Here we can see the virtue of 21...â€¢b7 and 22...â€¢d8 as a preparation for the doubling of rooks on the f-file.

26...â€¢e7

Heading for the protected square at f4. Premature was 26...e4? 27 â€¢g5 and Black’s position collapses.

27 â€¢h6

After 27 â€¢xa4 â€¢g6 28 â€¢xd7 â€¢xd7 29 g5 e4! 30 â€¢g1 â€¢h4+ 31 â€¢f1 â€¢g8 the game becomes very complex, where Black’s safer king might be a telling factor in the long run.

27...â€¢g6 28 â€¢g5!

Forcing the departure of Black’s powerful dark-squared bishop. The tempting 28 â€¢h5 â€¢xh5 29 gxh5 backfires after 29...â€¢f6! – Piket.

28...â€¢xg5 29 â€¢xg5 â€¢b4!

An ingenious sacrifice to create activity on all parts of the board.

30 gxf5?

A tactical oversight in time trouble. 30 â€¢xb4?! cxb4 31 â€¢a1 â€¢xc4 was equally unfavourable, but 30 b3! axb3 31 â€¢xb3 kept the balance.

30...â€¢xf5!

Possible thanks to the tactic ...â€¢g6-h4+.

31 â€¢xf5 â€¢xf5 32 h4

White gives up a pawn in order to prevent a knight check on h4. Both 32 â€¢xf5 â€¢xf5 33 â€¢g4 â€¢f4 and 32 â€¢xb4 cxb4 33 â€¢g3 â€¢g4+ lead to much greater difficulties.

32...â€¢xc4!

Piket has calculated that the knight on f5 can be recovered quickly.

33 h5?

The last chance was 33 â€¢xf5 â€¢f7 34 â€¢xe5+! â€¢xe5 35 â€¢g3 â€¢xd5+ 36 f3 with an inferior, but defendable position.

33...â€¢f4+ 34 â€¢h2 h6 35 â€¢g4 â€¢g8!

Now White has to give up his queen.

36 â€¢xf5 â€¢xg4 37 â€¢xg4 â€¢e7! 38 â€¢e1

At this point Black played 38...â€¢c1?! and eventually converted his advantage into a win. However, by 38...â€¢h4+! 39 â€¢h3 â€¢c1!, preparing 40...â€¢xe1, he could have won on the spot; e.g. 40 â€¢g3 â€¢xe1 41 â€¢xe1 â€¢xh3 42 â€¢xh3 â€¢xf2+ – Piket.

For the related exercises, see page 338.
Dynamics
In the first chapter I defined dynamic play as the one that creates new elements in the position, such as open files, weak squares, passed pawns, etc. Usually it is performed by pawn moves and occasionally by exchanges. According to that definition, this whole chapter is in fact filled with dynamic operations, as well as the section on "dynamic exchanges" in the previous chapter, and many other parts of the book. Thus it is rather difficult to separate dynamics from other strategical concepts, since it is constantly present in the battle. Anyway, in the following section we will have a look at some dynamic operations of a more radical nature, with a great impact on the strategical balance of the position.

Example 150
J.Garcia Padron-M.Suba
Las Palmas 1979

The Hedgehog structure is a good starting point when discussing the role of dynamics. Despite an evident space disadvantage, Black's position has a lot of dynamic potential, based mainly on the pawn advances ...d6-d5 and ...b6-b5. Once he achieves any of these advances, the position tends to change drastically, with a notable increase of activity among his forces.

21 \( \Box e2? \)

This knight retreat generates an attack on the d6-pawn; however, it also lets Black launch one of the pawn advances mentioned above. Perhaps White should have looked for a better destiny for his queen, a piece that often becomes exposed in the Hedgehog. 21 \( \Box e2? \) runs into the other key advance 21...d5! with the rook x-raying the queen along the e-file, but 21 \( \Box e1 \), followed by \( \Box c1 \) and \( \Box c1-a1 \), or even \( \Box e2 \) and \( \Box e1 \), was a more cautious option.

21...b5!

Romanian GM Mihai Suba is one of the pioneers in the Hedgehog, and he probably didn't think for a long time about this move.

22 cxb5

After 22 \( \Box x d6 \) bxc4 White ends up with a weak pawn on b3.

22...axb5 23 f3

Securing the e4-pawn. This time 23 \( \Box x d6 \) is well met by 23...b4 24 \( \Box a4 \) \( \Box x e4 \), when Black obtains a superior pawn structure and considerable activity for his pieces. Even so, after 25 \( \Box x b8 \) \( \Box x b8 \) White at least manages to swap the queens, thus reducing some of Black's initiative.

23...b4! 24 \( \Box a4 \) d5

This and the previous pawn advance are often executed in sequence, in order to divert the white knight from the centre before striking there.

25 exd5 \( \Box x d5 \)

In less than five moves, the position has changed noticeably. White no longer enjoys a space advantage, and most of his pawns can be considered as weaknesses. Meanwhile, Black's pieces remain harmoniously placed.
26 \texttt{d4} \texttt{a6}

Avoiding 27 \texttt{c6} with an unfavourable exchange. Of course 26...\texttt{wb7} was also possible; however, Suba prefers to keep his queen on the h2-b8 diagonal where it eyes the weak g3-pawn.

27 \texttt{wf2} \texttt{h5}

By the threat of 28...\texttt{xg3} 29 \texttt{xg3} \texttt{e5} Black provokes new weaknesses in the enemy camp. Even so, the straightforward 27...e5! followed by 28...e4 led to a bigger advantage – Suba.

28 \texttt{f4} \texttt{df6?!}

Now the knights become rather piled up on the kingside, and the white knight on a4 gains access to c5. By 28...\texttt{hf6}!, preparing ...h5-h4, Black maintained a pleasant edge.

29 \texttt{c6} \texttt{wb7} 30 \texttt{e5} \texttt{aa8} 31 \texttt{c5}! \texttt{wb8} 32 \texttt{g4?}

Allowing a powerful combination. Correct was 32 \texttt{d4}, covering a2, when 32...\texttt{xg2} 33 \texttt{xg2} \texttt{d5} leads to a roughly equal game.

32...\texttt{xf4!} 33 \texttt{xf4} \texttt{xa2} 34 \texttt{c2}

After 34 \texttt{cd7} \texttt{xd7} 35 \texttt{xf7}+ \texttt{h8} White can’t give mate by 36 \texttt{xg6}+ since his knight is pinned – Suba.

34...\texttt{xb2!}

The key move in Black’s combination, which exploits White’s vulnerability along the h2-b8 and a1-h8 diagonals.

35 \texttt{xb2} \texttt{cg4+} 36 \texttt{xg4} \texttt{xe5}+ 37 \texttt{h1} \texttt{xb2}

Black ended up with several extra pawns, and the rest is easy.

38 \texttt{xd5} \texttt{exd5} 39 \texttt{wd7} \texttt{e2} 40 \texttt{wd8}+ \texttt{f8} 41 \texttt{wb8} \texttt{c2}

White resigned.

\textbf{Example 151}

R. Hübner-G. Kasparov

Tilburg 1981

Here is another example from the same Hedgehog structure, where the location of the black knight on c5 adds some extra power to a potential ...b6-b5 or ...d6-d5 ad-
vance. If White chases the knight away by 23 b4?! , then after 23...\(\text{Q}\text{c}\text{d}7\) he gets a problem with the c4-pawn.

24 \(\text{cxb5}\)

The intermediate 24 b4? fails to 24...bxc4! 25 bxc5 dxc5 with a pin along the d-file.

24...d5! 25 exd5

Both 25 e5? \(\text{Q}\text{fe4}\) and 25 bxa6? \(\text{Q}\text{xa6}\) 26 \(\text{Q}\text{d2}\) dxe4 favour Black – Kasperov.

25...\(\text{Q}\text{xd5}\)

The previous pawn advances have led to a complete activation of Black’s forces.

26 \(\text{Q}\text{xd5}\) \(\text{Q}\text{xd5}\) 27 b4!

Faced with the threat of ...e6-e5, Hübner defends resourcefully. After the passive 27 \(\text{Q}\text{d2}\)?! axb5 Black has much the better game.

27...\(\text{Q}\text{xg2}\) 28 \(\text{Q}\text{xg2}\)

28...e5!

Kasparov exploits every possible resource in the position. Now this pawn is soon converted into a powerful passed pawn.

29 bxc5 exd4 30 \(\text{Q}\text{d2}\)!

White should have held on to his c-pawn by 30 \(\text{Q}\text{d3}\)! axb5 31 \(\text{Q}\text{c2}\) with just a slight disadvantage – Kasperov. In contrast, 30 bxa6? backfires after 30...d3!.

30...\(\text{Q}\text{xc5}\) 31 bxa6 \(\text{Q}\text{a8+}\) 32 \(\text{Qf3}\) \(\text{Q}\text{xax6}\)

Black has emerged from the complications with a pleasant advantage.

33 \(\text{Q}\text{ed1}\) \(\text{Qf5}\) 34 \(\text{Qe4}\) \(\text{Qa4}\)! 

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Now 35 \( \mathbb{N} \times d4 \) is met by 35...\( \mathbb{N} d5 \).

**35 a3 \( \mathbb{N} e8?! \)** 36 \( \mathbb{W} b7 \) \( \mathbb{N} d8 \)!

After discovering that 36...\( \mathbb{N} e2?! \) 37 \( \mathbb{N} x e2 \) \( \mathbb{W} x d1 \) permits 38 \( \mathbb{W} c8+ \) \( \mathbb{K} h7 \) 39 \( \mathbb{W} c2! \) with a probable draw, Kasparov starts all over again.

37 \( \mathbb{N} d3 \) \( h5! \)

Opening a new kingside front, an idea that was already possible two moves ago.

**38 \( \mathbb{N} x d2 \) \( \mathbb{W} e8! \)**

Preparing 39...\( \mathbb{N} x b8 \) to divert White's queen from the long diagonal.

**39 \( \mathbb{N} f1? \)**

This lets Black unleash a strong combination. 39 \( \mathbb{N} h2 \) was correct, vacating the g2-square for the queen, when 39...\( h4?! \) 40 \( \mathbb{W} g2 \) \( \mathbb{N} d5 \) followed by ...\( \mathbb{N} e5 \) keeps up the pressure; whereas 39 \( \mathbb{N} x d4? \) again failed to 39...\( \mathbb{N} d5 \).

**39...\( \mathbb{N} x b8 \) 40 \( \mathbb{W} c7 \) \( \mathbb{N} x b2! \) 41 \( \mathbb{N} x b2 \) \( \mathbb{W} e4 \)**

White's king is in great trouble.

**42 \( \mathbb{W} c4 \) \( \mathbb{W} h1+ \) 43 \( \mathbb{N} e2 \) \( \mathbb{W} g1 \) 44 \( \mathbb{N} b8+ \)**

The immediate 44 \( f4 \) loses a rook to 44...\( \mathbb{W} g2+ \).

**44...\( \mathbb{N} h7 \) 45 \( f4 \) \( h4! \)**

A final destruction of the white king's shelter.

**46 \( \mathbb{N} b5 \)**

Or 46 \( \mathbb{N} b3 \) \( \mathbb{N} f6! \) 47 \( \mathbb{N} d2 \) \( \mathbb{W} g2+! \) 48 \( \mathbb{N} d1 \) \( \mathbb{W} h1+ \) 49 \( \mathbb{N} d2 \) \( \mathbb{N} c6 \) and wins = Kasparov.

**46...\( \mathbb{N} x b5 \) 47 \( \mathbb{W} x b5 \) \( h x g3 \) 48 \( \mathbb{W} g5 \) \( \mathbb{W} f2+ \) 49 \( \mathbb{N} d1 \) \( \mathbb{W} f1+ \)**

White resigned, since both 50 \( \mathbb{N} d2 \) \( g2 \) 51 \( \mathbb{N} g3 \) \( \mathbb{N} h6! \) and 50 \( \mathbb{N} c2 \) \( \mathbb{W} e2+ \) 51 \( \mathbb{N} d2 \) \( d3+ \) 52 \( \mathbb{N} c1 \) \( \mathbb{W} e1+ \) lead to defeat.

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**Example 152**

**A. Chernin - A. Miles**

**Tunis Interzonal 1985**

Here is an example from an earlier stage of the game. Black is just a few moves away from achieving ...\( \mathbb{N} d7, \ldots \mathbb{N} e7 \) and ...0-0 with a normal battle. Thus Chernin hurries to transform the position by means of a strong pawn sacrifice.

**12 \( e5! \)**

Clearing the e4-square for the knight and, in a longer perspective, converting the d5-pawn into a passed pawn.

**12...\( dxe5 \)**

Declining the sacrifice by 12...\( \mathbb{W} e7 \) permits 13 \( e6! \) \( \mathbb{N} x f3 \) 14 \( \mathbb{N} x f3 \) \( f x e6 \) 15 \( \mathbb{W} g6+ \) \( \mathbb{W} f7 \) 16 \( \mathbb{W} x e6+ \) \( \mathbb{W} x e6+ \) 17 \( d x e 6 \) \( \mathbb{N} c6 \) 18 \( \mathbb{N} c4 \) with a clear advantage in the endgame – Chernin.

**13 \( \mathbb{N} e4 \) \( \mathbb{W} f4 \)**

The only way of hanging on to the e5-pawn, since both 13...\( \mathbb{W} f5?! \) 14 \( h3! \), intending 15 \( \mathbb{N} d6+ \), and 13...\( \mathbb{N} e7?! \) 14 \( d6 \) \( \mathbb{W} e6 \) 15 \( \mathbb{N} c4 \) are terrible for Black.

**14 \( \mathbb{N} x d2 \)**

White reinforces e4, enables a future \( \mathbb{N} c4 \), and sets up the threat of 15 \( g3 \) \( \mathbb{W} f5 \) 16 \( h3 \).

**14...\( f5?! \)**

This leads to a difficult game after White's strong reply. A safer alternative was 14...\( h5 \), vacating the h6-square for the queen, when 15 \( \mathbb{N} c4 \) \( \mathbb{W} h6 \) 16 \( \mathbb{N} x e5 \) restores the material balance with some advantage for White.
15 d3!

The simplest choice. Once these bishops are exchanged Black will suffer on the light squares.

15...\textit{\texttt{xe4}}

After 15...\textit{\texttt{d7}} 16 g3 \textit{\texttt{g4}} 17 d6! \textit{\texttt{g6}} 18 0-0 the d6-pawn has a hampering effect on Black’s development.

16 \textit{\texttt{xe4}} \textit{\texttt{d7}} 17 g3

The simple 17 0-0 was also strong, e.g. 17...f5 18 g3, when both 18...\textit{\texttt{f3}} 19 \textit{\texttt{d2}} \textit{\texttt{xd5}} 20 \textit{\texttt{xf5}} and 18...\textit{\texttt{g4}} 19 f3 \textit{\texttt{h5}} 20 g4!, intending 20...\textit{\texttt{fxg4}}? 21 \textit{\texttt{f6+}}, leave Black in big trouble. In the game Chernin prefers a direct attack.

17...\textit{\texttt{g4}} 18 h3 \textit{\texttt{h5}}

19 d6!

A key advance, which prevents ...\textit{\texttt{e7}} and clears the a2-g8 and h1-a8 diagonals for the white pieces.

19...\textit{\texttt{g6}}

19...f5 runs into 20 \textit{\texttt{xc5}}! \textit{\texttt{c8}} 21 \textit{\texttt{xf5+}}, while the preparative 19...\textit{\texttt{c8}} fails to 20 \textit{\texttt{xa6}} – Makarychev.

20 \textit{\texttt{d1}}

Instead of complicating things by 20 \textit{\texttt{xc5?}} \textit{\texttt{xd6}}, Chernin simply reinforces his position.

20...b3 21 \textit{\texttt{we2}}!

Avoiding 21 \textit{\texttt{xb3}} f5 with a glimpse of counterplay for Black.

21...f5 22 g4!

Another power move that softens up the b1-h7 diagonal. Now 22...\textit{\texttt{fxe4?}} obviously loses the exchange after 23 \textit{\texttt{xe4}}.

22...\textit{\texttt{c4}} 23 \textit{\texttt{b1}} \textit{\texttt{fxg4}}

This permits a decisive invasion on the queenside, but after 23...\textit{\texttt{c8}} 24 \textit{\texttt{g3}} Black’s position also collapses.

24 \textit{\texttt{xc4}} \textit{\texttt{f7}} 25 \textit{\texttt{c6}} \textit{\texttt{d8}} 26 \textit{\texttt{hxg4}} \textit{\texttt{g6}} 27 \textit{\texttt{c5!}}

Preparing \textit{\texttt{e4-d5}}, among other things.

27...\textit{\texttt{g8}} 28 \textit{\texttt{e4}} \textit{\texttt{g7}} 29 \textit{\texttt{xa6}} \textit{\texttt{f4}} 30 \textit{\texttt{c7+}} \textit{\texttt{f7}} 31 \textit{\texttt{c4+}}! \textit{\texttt{f6}} 32 \textit{\texttt{d5+}}

Black resigned.

\textbf{Example 153}

Y.Razuvaev-K.Honfi

Cienfuegos 1976

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node (board) at (0,0) {
    \begin{chessboard}
      \square{e4} \square{e5} \square{d4} \square{c6} \square{b5} \square{a3} \square{c4} \square{d3} \\
      \square{b7} \square{a6} \square{b5} \square{c4} \square{d3} \square{e4} \square{f5} \square{g6} \\
      \square{h7} \square{g8} \square{f7} \square{e6} \square{d5} \square{c4} \square{b3} \square{a2} \\
    \end{chessboard}
  
  \end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

Dynamic play is also possible with less material on the board. In the above position, can you find anything better than the natural 16 \texttt{fd1} - ?

16 e5!

A surprising advance that aims at creating a passed pawn on the c-file.

16...\texttt{dxe5}?!

With hindsight it easy to suggest the
pragmatic 16...\(\text{f}d8\), when 17 exd6 exd6 18 \(\text{f}d1\) yields White a slight but enduring advantage.

17 b5 \(\text{e}e8\) 18 c5

Thanks to the previous alteration of the pawn structure, this pawn has a free route towards c7.

18...\(\text{d}d7\) 19 \(\text{d}d5!\)

Before pushing the pawn further it makes sense to activate the knight. 19 c6?! bxc6 20 bxc6 \(\text{b}b6\) followed by ...\(\text{c}c8\) is less clear.

19...\(\text{e}e6\) 20 \(\text{e}e7+\) \(\text{g}g7\) 21 c6! bxc6 22 bxc6 \(\text{b}b6\) 23 c7

As we saw in some earlier examples, such as Gligoric-Popovic (p. 157), a passed pawn on the seventh rank is a powerful thing, and here it is well supported by the rest of White’s pieces.

23...\(\text{d}d7\) 24 \(\text{f}f1\) \(\text{a}a4\)

The desirable 24...\(\text{f}f6?\) failed to 25 \(\text{xd}7!\) \(\text{xd}7\) 26 \(\text{c}8\)\(\text{w}\).

25 \(\text{d}d6!\) \(\text{f}f6!\) 26 \(\text{xb}6\) \(\text{xe}7\) 27 \(\text{b}b7\)

After precise play from both sides, White keeps a clear advantage thanks to his strong passed pawn.

27...\(\text{f}f6?\)

Now the passed pawn is realized almost automatically. 27...\(\text{d}d7?\) failed to 28 \(\text{c}8\)\(\text{w}\)! \(\text{a}xc8\) 29 \(\text{d}d1\) \(\text{f}d8\) 30 \(\text{b}5\), so an exchange

sacrifice with 27...\(\text{d}d6\) 28 \(\text{a}a6\) \(\text{c}c6!\) 29 \(\text{b}b2\) \(\text{a}a8\) seems like Black’s last chance for survival. Perhaps White should go for more by 28 \(\text{b}b2!\) followed by \(\text{d}d2+\) instead.

28 \(\text{b}b1\) \(\text{c}c6\) 29 \(\text{b}b8\) \(\text{c}c8\) 30 \(\text{c}c1!\) \(\text{a}xb8\)

Or 30...\(\text{d}d7\) 31 \(\text{xa}8\) \(\text{xa}8\) 32 \(\text{a}a6\) \(\text{c}c8\) 33 \(\text{b}b1!\) and wins – Gulko.

31 \(\text{cxb}8\)\(\text{w}\) \(\text{xb}8\) 32 \(\text{xc}6\)

White soon realized his material advantage.

So far in this section the dynamic operations have mainly taken place in the centre, and this is indeed where the strongest impact on the strategical balance can be expected. Even so, positional transformations can also occur as a result of dynamic play on the flanks, as in the following examples.

**Example 154**

*M.Ulibin-Je.Hall*

Stockholm 1998

In exchange for his bad pawn structure, White enjoys some initiative thanks to the semi-open f-file and the unsafe location of the black king. Now if we let Black play alone for a few moves, then after ...\(\text{c}c8\)-b8, ...\(\text{e}7\)-f6 and ...\(\text{c}8\) his superior pawn struc-
ture would yield him a clear and enduring advantage. Thus White needs to act quickly.

15 a4!

A strong advance that creates new opportunities on the queenside. 15  d5?!  d8 is less constructive, while after 15  f3?!  xe3+ 16  h1  c8! Black soon solves his problems by returning the pawn; e.g. 17  xe5  xh3 18  xh3  dx5 19  xf7  d8 or 17  ae1  c5 18  xe5  xe5 19  xf7  b8, followed by  e7, in both cases with a roughly equal game.

15...c8

After 15...a6?! 16 a5, with ideas like  a4-b6(+) and b4-b5, things just get worse for Black – Hall.

16 a5  d8 17 a6!

By this and the next pawn advance Ulitin aims to create a protected square for his knights on c6, which would have a strong effect on the position.

17...b6 18 b4!

A more "static" approach with 18  cb5?!  d7 19  a3 promises less after 19...b8 20  c3  c8.

18...d7 19 b5  e7 20 a2!

Heading for c6. We saw a similar manoeuvre in Hellsten-Olesen.

20...f6 21  b4  b8 22  dc6+  a8 23  ad1

Black has basically achieved the plan outlined under the initial diagram – his king is safe, his bishop has been brought into play, and the rooks are connected. However, the terrific knight on c6 leaves him without any real perspectives, so Hall decides upon an exchange sacrifice.

23...cc8 24  xe5  xe5 25  c6  xc6 26  xc6  e7

Of course not 26...xc6? 27  xf7 and Black’s fortress is destroyed.

At this point, if Black just manages to play 26...c8 and 27...xc6 then he would have no major problems – Hall. However...

27 c4!

Preparing a pawn sacrifice on c5 to open up the position for the rooks, after which the black king will face great danger. Another idea in the same dynamic spirit is 27  d4?!  xd4 (or 27...c8 28  c4) 28  ed4  c8 29  d5 with a clear advantage – Rybka.

27...c8 28  c5!  bc5

Both 28...xc5 29  d7, followed by  fxf7, and 28...xc6 29  xd6  xd6 30  e5!  xe5 31  f3  c7 32  d8+! are fatal for Black – Hall.

29  b1  xc6 30  b7  c7

Black has managed to restore the material balance, but now his king is too exposed.

31  cc7

After 31  b1?!  d8 32  f3  c4 Black has more hopes of survival.

31...xc7 32  xc5  xc8

The f7-pawn can’t be saved; e.g. 32...f6 33  e8+ or 32...f6 33  e5!  dx5 34  f3+  b8 35  b1+ and wins.

33  xf7

White has managed to break through Black’s fortress and now proceeds with a direct attack.

33...f6 34  b1  c4 35  b7  c3 36  xa7+  b8 37  b7+  a8 38  c7  b8 39  b7!
Not 39 \( \text{Qd}7? \text{Qb}1+ 40 \text{Kf}2 \text{Qh}4+ 41 \text{g}3 \text{Qxg}3+! \) with a perpetual after 42 \text{Qxg}3 \text{Qg}1+ 43 \text{Kh}3 \text{Qf}1+ or 42 \text{hxg}3 \text{Qc}2+ 43 \text{Qf}3 \text{Qd}1+, but 39 \text{a}7 in the same spirit wins since the check on f1 is no longer available. Anyway, Ulibin's solution is much more technical.

39...\text{Qc}8 40 \text{Qc}7! \text{Qxc}7 41 \text{Qxc}7 \text{Qb}8 42 \text{Qc}6 \text{Qe}5 43 \text{Qf}2 \text{Qa}7 44 \text{h}3

Preparing a decisive king march to the opposite flank. Black resigned.

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**Example 155**

F. Hellers-J. Hellsten

Swedish Team Championship

1999

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White accepts the former, since after 17 \text{fxg}5?! \text{Qxc}5 the simple plan of \text{Qxg}2 and \text{Qb}7+ is unpleasant for him. 17...\text{gxf}4 18 \text{gxf}4 \text{Qe}7

The more straightforward 18...\text{Qg}8 19 \text{Qg}3 \text{h}5 permits 20 \text{Wh}7! with some interference in Black's attack. In the game, I prefer to put the other rook on g8, so that the one on h8 supports the ...\text{h}5-\text{h}4 advance.

---

19 \text{Qe}4 \text{Qd}g8 20 \text{Qf}2

Some necessary prophylaxis, since after 20 \text{Qad}1 \text{f}5! both 21 \text{Qd}6+ \text{Qxd}6 22 \text{exd}6 \text{Qxg}2+?! 23 \text{Qxg}2 \text{Qce}5+, followed by ...\text{Qc}6, and 21 \text{Qxf}6 \text{Qxf}6 22 \text{Qg}3 \text{h}5 with ...\text{h}5-\text{h}4 next are dangerous for White. 20...\text{f}5!

Just at the right moment, before White is able to resume the plan of 21 \text{Qad}1 and 22 \text{Qd}6+.

21 \text{Qd}6+

After 21 \text{Qxf}6 \text{Qxf}6 22 \text{Qxf}6 \text{Qxf}6 White ends up placed passively. Whenever his knight moves to g3, the black one enters on d4. In the game Hellers prefers to sacrifice a pawn for activity.

21...\text{Qxd}6 22 \text{exd}6 \text{Qxd}6 23 \text{Qd}1 \text{Qc}7 24 \text{Qg}3

This doesn't help White too much, but after 24 \text{Qh}1 \text{Qxg}2! 25 \text{Qxg}2 \text{Qe}7 26 \text{Qg}3 \text{h}5! he is also under considerable pressure.
24...h5! 25 d2 d4
A “dynamic exchange” that yields Black a strong square for his knight on c5. However, the simple 25...g7! was virtually winning – Hellers.
26 xd4 cxd4 27 xb7+ xb7
After 27...xb7 28 c5! White gets some unnecessary counterplay.
28 xd4 c5

Despite the material balance White is clearly worse due to his unsafe king.
29 f2 h4 30 e2 c6 31 xg1 xg1 32 xg1 h1
A tempting move in time trouble, but 32...g8 33 f3 h3 was probably simpler; e.g. 34 e3 g2 35 d2 x2d2 36 xd2 e4+ 37 f2 xc4 with a sound extra pawn.
33 f3 g8 34 e3 g2 35 d2?!
Preferable was 35 d1! xxd1 36 xdd1 xxb2 37 d2! with an attack on the h4-pawn. Black should probably try 36...e4 instead, preferring activity to material.
35...h3! 36 d1 xd1 37 xd1 xxb2?!
37...e4 was stronger, as in the previous note, in order to keep the active rook on the board.
38 d2 xd2 39 e4+ 40 d3 c6 41 g5 f2+ 42 d4?
The last chance was 42 e3 g4+ 43 d4 xh2 44 xh3 with some hopes of a draw. In the game Black opens a decisive second front on the queenside.
42 a5! 43 xe6 a4
With the strong threat of 44...b3 45 axb3 a3 46 c3 d3+.
44 e5 g4+ 45 xf5 xh2 46 e4 g4
Now White is unable to defend both flanks and his task becomes hopeless.
47 f3 h2 48 g2 e3+ 49 xh2 f5!

Taking the d4-square from the white knight. In view of the forthcoming 50...b3 with a quick promotion, White resigned.

One of the openings with major dynamic potential is the English. Let’s see a complete game.

Example 156
A.Onischuk-Z.Hracek
German League 2001
English Opening (A36)

1 c4 c5 2 c3 g6 3 g3 g7 4 g2 c6 5 a3
Before defining his kingside set-up White prepares the typical b2-b4 advance.
5...d6 6 xbd1 a5 7 e3 f5?!
On this square the bishop just gets in the way of a future...f7-f5 advance, besides
which it soon becomes exposed to the white pieces. A simple knight move to f6 or h6 followed by ...0-0 was preferable, or else 7...e5 intending ...Ge7 and ...0-0.

8 d3 e5 9 Ge2 Ge7 10 b5?! 0-0 11 Gc3

The set-up with b5 and Gc3 is rather logical after Black’s 7th move, since the natural reaction with ...d6-d5 would require a new bishop move by ...f5-e6. In the game Hracek instead opts for kingside play.

11...Gd7 12 Gd4! Gc8

A sad necessity, since after 12...Gxe4?! 13 dxe4! Black ends up with weaknesses along the d-file.

13 h3 h6

By 13...h6 Black prepares 14...Ge6 followed by ...f7-f5, without having to worry about Gd4-g5. However, after White’s strong reply he will have to forget about this plan.

14 g4! Ge6 15 g5! h5

Keeping the h-file closed. 15...f5 16 gxf6 Gxf6 gives White a protected square for his knight on e4, and he could consider 17 h4 next with some kingside activity. Also after 15...hxg5 16 Gxg5 Gf5 17 h4?! the black king is starting to feel uncomfortable on g8, while the knight enjoys two “semi-protected” squares at e4 and g5, a similar case to Garcia Gonzalez-Karpov (p. 54).

16 b3

Resuming the development. At this point Onischuk probably had the strong 19th move already in mind.

16...Gd8 17 Gb2 Gd6

Black has considerable difficulties in dislodging the active enemy knights and freeing his position. If 17...d5, then 18 Gxc5 Gxc5 19 Gf1! Gd8 (covering the d5-pawn and the c7-square) 20 Gxe6 fxe6 21 Ge2 with a clear advantage – Onischuk. White could consider h3-h4 next, followed by Gh3 and Gg1 with pressure on the weak pawns on e6 and g6.

18 Gbc3!

Leaving the black knight misplaced on a7.

18...Gb8

A key moment in the game. Black is preparing ...b7-b5 with queenside counterplay, and 19 a4?! Gd6, followed by ...Gb4, would finally let him improve his knights and facilitate the desired ...d6-d5 advance. But White’s next move shows that his dynamic potential on the other flank is not yet exhausted.

19 f4!

Clearing the a1-h8 diagonal for the bishop, thus taking up the battle for the f6-square.
19...exf4

As a result of the central tension, after 19...b5 20 fxe5 dxe5 21 h4! Black ends up with a weak pawn on c5. On the other hand, 20...exf5 21 Qd5 soon lets White land a knight on f6.

20 Qf6+!

An ingenious intermediate move that leads to the seizure of the long diagonal, since 20...Kh8 would just give Black additional worries about a potential Qxh5 sacrifice.

20...Qxf6 21 gxf6 Wxf6

Or 21...fxe3 22 0-0 with the primitive plan of Wxe2xe3-h6.

22 0-0 Wd8 23 Wf3?!

Heading for f4-h6, but considerably simpler was 23 exf4! Qc6 24 f5! Qxf5 25 Qxf5 gxf5 26 Wh5 with a strong attack – Onischuk.

23 Wh4!

Hracek naturally avoids 23...fxe3? 24 Qe4! f5 25 Wxe3 with fatal consequences and instead invites to a queen exchange on f4.

24 Qd5!

Keeping up the attack. The provocative 24 Qe4?! f5 25 Qe3, followed by Qd5, was interesting as well.

24...Qxd5 25 Wxd5 We7

Of course not 25...fxe3? 26 Qf6 Wg3 27 Qf3.

26 exf4 Qb6 27 Wf3 Qc6

28 f5!

Clearing new lines towards the black king. 28 Wb1 Wh4 29 f5 Qd4 is less clear.

28...Qd4?

An impulsive reply that lets White breakthrough on the kingside. Black should have disputed the open file by 28...Wb8, when after 29 Wb1 Wxe1 30 Wxe1 Wh1+ 31 Wg2 both 31...Qb1 32 Wf2! and 31...Qe5 32 Qxe5 Qxe5 33 Wxb7 Qc8 34 f6 keep some advantage – Onischuk.

29 Qxd4 cxd4 30 Wb1 Wf6 31 fxg6!

Considering the bad enemy pawn structure White no longer has any reason to avoid the endgames, e.g. 31...Wxf3 32 Qxf3 fxg6 33 We6! recovering the pawn with interest.

31...Wxg6 32 Wf4 Qd7 33 Wh2!

Preparing a deadly Wg1. The d4-pawn can wait.

33...Qc5

After 33...Qe5 34 Qe4 Wg7 35 Wg1 Qg6 36 Wxd6 White is also winning.

34 Qe4 Qe6 35 Wxd6

Black resigned. If 35...Wh6 then one simple reply is 36 Qg1+ Kh8 37 Wf5+ Qg7 38 Wxd4 with a crushing advantage.
Another structure rich in dynamics is the one with hanging pawns. Here is a short example.

**Example 157**  
**J.Aagaard-R.Åkesson**  
Gothenburg 1998

```
17...f5?!
Black reinforces his knight on e4 but also weakens the e5-square and the whole a1-h8 diagonal. Preferable was 17...Ac8 or 17...Af6 with a normal game.
18 Ae5 Af6 19 Ae2!
Clearing the way for the bishop and preparing Ae2-f4.
19...g5
19...cxd4 20 exd4 Ag5 was safer, when 21 Af4!? Ax f4 22 gxf4, followed by f2-f3, yields White some advantage thanks to his strong knight.
20 f3 Ad6 21 f4! g4?
This avoids the arrival of the knight at f4, but soon leads to far more serious problems. Instead, 21...h6 runs into 22 g4! Ae4 (or 22...fxg4? 23 Wg6+) 23 Ag3 Axg3 24 hxg3 when Black is incapable of covering all his weak points, but 21...Ae4 22 fxg5 Axg5 23 Af4 We7 was probably a lesser evil.
```

22 dxc5 bxc5 23 b4!

A nice blow that wins the key square on d4 for the white pieces and, indirectly, command of the whole position.

23...d4
A last attempt to complicate the game. 23...cxb4 24 Ad4 We8 25 Ax f5 leads to a collapse of Black's kingside, while after 23...Ax b4 24 Ax c5 the threat of 25 Ad4 is decisive, e.g. 24...Ae4 25 Ad4 Wd6 26 Ab5! Ac8 27 a3 Aa6 28 Ax f5! Ax f5 29 Abxd5 with substantial material gains.

24 bxc5 A xg2 25 Ax d4! We8
Or 25...Wd5 26 Ax f5, winning more material.

26 Axg2 Ax e5 27 fxe5 Ae4 28 Wd3!
With the double threat of 29 Wxa6 and 29 Wc4+. Less technical was 28 Ax f5?! Ad2.

28...Ac7
Or 28...Axc5 29 Wc4+ Ah8 30 e6 and the long diagonal finally charges its price.

29 Wc4+ Af8 30 Ac1 Ad5 31 Af5 Ac2
32 Wxg4 1-0

---

**Example 158**  
**J.Hellsten-R.Bator**  
Malmö 1997

In a King's Indian battle Black has just
played ...\Dd8-d7 in order to double rooks on the d-file. To aspire for any advantage White somehow needs to alter the balance of the position.

18 a4!

A strong advance that creates new opportunities on the queenside. At the time of this game, I had recently seen the encounter M.Krasenkow-J.Hickl, Jakarta 1996, in which a similar idea was effected.

18...\Bc4

After 18...\Bxa4?! 19 \Dxa4 the knight obtains interesting destinies at b6 and c5, while 18...\Dxc4 19 \Dxc4 bxc4 20 \Wc2 also lets White progress on the queenside; e.g. 20...a5?! 21 bxa5 \Bxa5 22 \Wc4 and the outside passed pawn is a long-term asset.

19 a5!

Fixing the weaknesses on b6 and a6, and also freeing the a4-square for the knight. In contrast, the attempt to recover the pawn at once by 19 \Wc2? runs into 19...\Dd4!, intending 20...\Dd7 as well as 20 \Dxd4 exd4 21 \Dxd4 \Bg4! with a decisive double attack.

19...\Dd4?!

A dynamic reply. 19...\Dd8? obviously failed to 20 \Dxb6, while after 19...\Dxd1 20 \Dxd1 \Dd7 21 \Dd6 \Wb7 22 \Dc4 the c4-pawn is soon collected with a slight advan-
tage, e.g. 22...\Wb5 23 \Dd2! followed by \Dxc4. The simple 21 \Dc4? is interesting as well.

20 \Dd6

Preparing \Dc4-c5. Again the captures on d4 were inadequate due to the tactical resource ...\Dg4, while 20 \Dc4? at once fails to 20...\Dxe4.

20...\Dd6

The alternative was 20...\Wb8, keeping the queen away from the vulnerable d-file. White could react by 21 \Dc4 \Dxe4 22 \Dc5! \Dd5 23 \Dxe4 \Dxe4 24 \Wxc4 \Dxb1 25 \Dxb1 with a clear initiative for the pawn, e.g. 25...\Wb7 26 \Dc1 \Dd5 27 \Wc6 \Wc6 28 \Dxc6 \Dxb4 29 \Dc7! \Dd5 30 \Dd7 with \Dc4 coming up.

21 \Dc4

White improves his knight, exploiting the fact that the e4-pawn is immune. Now the threat of 22 \Dxd4 exd4 23 \Dxc4 forces Black to swap his active rook.

21...\Dxd1 22 \Dxd1 \Wb4

Black has won a second pawn; however, his queenside structure would soon collapse if it wasn’t for the bishop on e6, something that explains my next move.

23 \Dc5! \c3?!

This leads to irreparable damage to the pawn structure, so 23...\Dg4 was preferable,
when 24 \( \text{b1} \) \( \text{wa3} \) 25 \( \text{xc4} \) yields White a pleasant advantage despite the minus pawn. I should admit that, during the game, the dynamic sacrifice 23...\( \text{d5!} \) worried me a little. However, White has no reason to alter the balance by 24 \( \text{exd5?!} \) \( \text{cxd5} \), and should rather continue 24 \( \text{b1} \), when both 24...\( \text{wc3} \) 25 \( \text{wa4} \) and 24...\( \text{wa3} \) 25 \( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{fxe6} \) 26 \( \text{xc4} \) keep Black troubled by his weak pawns.

\[ \text{24 b1 wa3 25 xe6 fxe6 26 b3 wa4 27 xc3!} \]

Simplest, in order to speed up the attack on the a6-pawn. White's own pawn on e4 is less relevant.

\[ \text{27...wxc2 28 xxc2 xe4 29 xc6} \]

The position has clarified. Despite his extra pawn Black's task is difficult due to the weakness on a6.

\[ \text{29...d2 30 e2 b3 31 c4!} \]

Just as on the previous move, White refrains from taking on e6 so as to keep the bishop pair. After 31 \( \text{xe6?!} \) \( \text{d4} \) 32 \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) Black has some remote hope of a draw due to the opposite-coloured bishops.

\[ \text{31...d4 32 c7 f8?!} \]

32...\( f6 \) was relatively better, preparing 33...\( d8 \), when White should avoid 33 \( \text{a7?!} \) \( \text{c8!} \) with counterplay. Instead, 33 \( \text{d7!} \) is strong, when 33...\( \text{c8?} \) runs into 34 \( \text{xd4} \), while other moves permit 34 \( f4! \) with an indirect attack on the enemy knight.

\[ \text{33 f4!} \]

After the black bishop's departure from the long diagonal, this blow is decisive.

\[ \text{33...b5} \]

Or 33...\( \text{d6} \) 34 \( \text{d7} \) \( \text{c8} \) 35 \( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{c1+} \) 36 \( \text{f1!} \) with a quick win.

\[ \text{34 xe6+ h8 35 c8! xc8 36 xc8 d6 37 xa6 ef4 38 b7 g7} \]

Equally hopeless is 38...\( \text{xb7} \) 39 \( \text{a6} \) or 38...\( \text{c4} \) 39 \( \text{d4+} \) \( \text{g7} \) 40 \( \text{xg7+} \) \( \text{g7} \) 41 \( \text{a6} \), when the g-pawn decides in the end.

\[ \text{39 a6 c4 40 c5} \]

In this desperate position, Black lost on time.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 340.
Chapter Five

Prophylaxis

The previous three chapters showed numerous examples on how to improve our pieces, realize favourable exchanges, and use our pawns for all kinds of benefits. In contrast, the focus of the present chapter is on the opponent’s play, more specifically the measures that we can take to prevent or confront his plans. I have used “Prophylaxis” as the name of this chapter, since it is a familiar term in chess literature when referring to the above matters. Even so, this term can have more than one interpretation, which is why I have opted for a further split in several concepts.

Before going more into details, here is a brief definition of each concept, as they are interpreted in this book:

**Restriction**
Prevent the opponent’s plans and movements, i.e. not let him do what he wants.

**Prophylaxis**
Prepare for the opponent’s plans, i.e. let him do what he wants but with less impact than expected.

**Provocation**
Force the opponent to take unwanted actions.

**Restriction**
In the previous chapters we often came across the idea of restriction. For example, in Miles-Sunye Neto (p. 86) the former successfully limited the opponent’s light-squared bishop, while in Karpov-Lautier (p. 105) White constantly prevented the ...c6-c5 advance. Generally speaking, the restrictive measures are directed either at the opponent’s plans, or at the range of some of his pieces. Although these could sometimes be regarded as synonymous, the former case is more specific and the latter more general. Let’s start with some examples closely related to the restriction of enemy plans.

*Example 159*

J.H.Donner-W.Balcerowski
Varna Olympiad 1962

In a kind of Old Benoni Black has just
played ...\texttt{\textit{ced7-g6}}, vacating the e7-square for the bishop in order to develop his pieces. How would you now continue with White? The equally developing 9 \texttt{\textit{Ad3}} $\texttt{\textit{Ae7}}$ 10 0-0 permits 10...\texttt{\textit{Ag5}}! and Black manages to swap his “bad” bishop for the opponent’s good one with a decent game.

\texttt{\textit{b6}} 12 \texttt{\textit{Dd1}}!

Heading for the nice square at f5.

12...\texttt{\textit{Dd7}} 13 \texttt{\textit{Be3}} \texttt{\textit{Af6}}

If 13...\texttt{\textit{Af6}}, preparing ...\texttt{\textit{Ae7}}, then White could consider 14 \texttt{\textit{Ah3}} \texttt{\textit{Ae7}} 15 \texttt{\textit{Axd7! \textit{Wxd7}}} \texttt{\textit{Gg4}}, winning a pawn.

14 \texttt{\textit{Hh5}} \texttt{\textit{Hh8}} 15 \texttt{\textit{Ff5}}

9 \texttt{\textit{Gg3!}}

Donner is attentive to the opponent’s plan and takes restrictive measures.

9...\texttt{\textit{Ff7}}

10 \texttt{\textit{Hh4!}}

Now Black’s minor pieces don’t have any prospects whatsoever.

10...0-0 11 \texttt{\textit{Dd2}}

Other good options were 11 \texttt{\textit{Hh3}} and 11 \texttt{\textit{Dd1}}.

15...\texttt{\textit{Fa7}}?

The last chance was 15...\texttt{\textit{Hh6}} with a horrible position, in particular for the knight on h8 which can’t return to the game without a further weakening of the kingside.

16 \texttt{\textit{Hh6}}

In view of 16...\texttt{\textit{Gg6}} 17 \texttt{\textit{Axe7+ \textit{Wxe7}}} 18 \texttt{\textit{Gg5}}, Black resigned. Admittedly Balcerekowski could have defended better, yet the effect of White’s 9th and 10th moves on the battle were surprisingly strong.

\texttt{Example 160}

\textit{N.Short-G.Kasparov}

Amsterdam 1996

White has a more pleasant position. His isolated pawn on e5 is restricts the movements of the enemy pieces, and the semi open f-file will be useful in an attack. Before taking concrete action, Short considers the opponent’s intentions.
Kasparov reinstallation the threat of ...\(\text{axb4}\), but the time spent on the \(\ldots\text{g5-e7 manouevre could have cost him dearly. 26...h4}\) was a safer choice, when 27 \(\text{we2!}\) followed by \(\text{wf2}\) keeps a clear advantage.

\textbf{27 gxh5!}

With all the pieces directed at the black king, this is the right moment to strike. Instead, the game saw 27 \(\text{b1?}\) h4 28 \(\text{we3}\) \(\text{e8}\), preparing \(\ldots\text{c7-d5}\), and Black improved his position to some extent.

\textbf{27...\text{dxh5} 28 \text{xf7}\! \text{xf7} 29 \text{xf7} \text{xf7} 30 \text{w6+ f8} 31 \text{w6+ g7} 32 \text{g6}}

White mates in a few moves – Short.

\textbf{Example 161}

\textbf{P.Konguvel-T.Markowski}

Koszalin 1998

The previous example showed the usage of restriction in the attack, whereas here we will see it in a more defensive context. The location of the kings on opposite flanks suggests that both sides are eager to attack. However, the straightforward 11...b5 is well met by 12 \(\text{g3}\) g6 13 h4!, preparing h4-h5 and \(\text{h2}\), when 13...\(\text{axh4}\) obviously fails to 14 \(\text{h2}\). Markowski finds a more appealing solution.
11...\textit{h}4!

Ruling out the \textit{h}2-\textit{h}4 advance and, indirectly, the whole white attack.

12 \textit{g}3 \textit{g}6 13 \textit{b}7 \textit{g}7

In the absence of enemy threats on the kingside, Black is in no hurry and slowly reinforces his position. The dynamic 13...\textit{b}5!? 14 \textit{cx}b5 \textit{c}7 was also interesting.

14 \textit{d}3 \textit{e}7 15 \textit{h}6?! \textit{f}6!

Now the positional threat of 16...\textit{g}5 forces the white bishop to return.

16 \textit{e}3 \textit{f}7 17 \textit{g}2 \textit{f}8 18 \textit{ge}2 \textit{d}7 19 \textit{f}4

This yields Black new opportunities on the e-file, but there was no other real way of making progress; e.g. 19 \textit{wh}3 \textit{g}5!? 20 \textit{gg}3 \textit{g}6, heading for \textit{f}4.

19...\textit{exf}4 20 \textit{xf}4 \textit{b}8 21 \textit{we}2 \textit{b}5!

With excellent counterplay. The game continued 22 \textit{d}2 \textit{f}5!? 23 \textit{gxf}5 \textit{gxf}5 24 \textit{g}1 \textit{b}4 25 \textit{dd}1 \textit{f}x4 26 \textit{c}2 \textit{w}5 27 \textit{wg}2 \textit{f}5 and Black hung on to his extra pawn.

\textbf{Example 162}

\textbf{V.Smyslov-L.Schmid}

Helsinki Olympiad 1952

In this Benoni structure White has a few different ideas at his disposal, such as \textit{wd}2 and \textit{h}6 in order to swap the strong fi-

12 \textit{b}3!

Smyslov has observed that Black is planning ...\textit{xc}4, followed by ...\textit{a}7-\textit{a}6 and ...\textit{b}6-\textit{b}5 with queenside counterplay. By 12 \textit{b}3 he prepares to meet 12...\textit{xc}4 by 13 \textit{bx}c4!, after which the ...\textit{b}6-\textit{b}5 advance is no longer feasible. In contrast, 12 \textit{e}5?! \textit{wh}5 yields Black counterplay.

12...\textit{dd}7

12...\textit{wh}5 is met by the simple 13 \textit{dd}2, while after 12...\textit{we}8 13 \textit{wd}2 \textit{xc}4 14 \textit{bx}c4! \textit{e}6 15 \textit{ff}3!? \textit{ex}d5 16 \textit{ex}d5 \textit{a}6 17 \textit{ab}1 \textit{wd}7 18 \textit{wd}3, White keeps the ...\textit{b}6-\textit{b}5 advance at bay with some advantage.

13 \textit{wd}2 \textit{f}5

Now that queenside counterplay is no longer available, Schmid logically looks for activity on the other flank.

14 \textit{dd}1 \textit{fx}e4 15 \textit{xe}4 \textit{ff}5

After the complications apparently favour White; e.g. 17...\textit{ex}d5? 18 \textit{gg}4 or 17...\textit{ex}d5?! 18 \textit{ex}d6! \textit{ex}d6 19 \textit{ff}3, while 17...\textit{w}7? runs into 18 \textit{cx}d6! \textit{ex}d6 19 \textit{cx}d6 \textit{wx}d6 20 \textit{cc}4. Finally, 17...\textit{e}5 18 \textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 19 \textit{c}4 leaves
Black in a rather cramped position. **16 \( g4! \)**

Using some minor tactics Smyslov indirectly defends the d5-pawn.

16...\( \text{xd5} \) 17 \( e6+! \text{xe6} \) 18 \( \text{xd5} \)

Thanks to his superior activity and slight material advantage, White is better.

Now let's see a few examples featuring the restriction of specific enemy pieces.

**Example 163**

I.Boleslavsky-P.Keres
Candidates Tournament, Zürich 1953

20...\( \text{c4!} \)

The immediate 20...\( \text{x}\text{xb2?} \) runs into 21 \( \text{xax5} \text{xa5} \) 22 \( \text{g6! axa1} \) 23 \( \text{xf7+ h8} \)

24 \( \text{xa1} \) with a strong attack.

21 \( \text{e4 \text{xb2}} \)

Black wins a pawn, something that urges Boleslavsky to sacrifice the exchange.

22 \( \text{bxc5 axa1} \) 23 \( \text{xa1 f5!} \)

Simplest, now that 24 \( \text{e6} \) can be met by 24...\( \text{xe5!} \).

24 \( \text{xb7 xb7} \) 25 \( \text{c5 c6} \)

Black soon won.
Example 164
W.Winter-J.R.Capablanca
Hastings 1919

Perhaps only at this point Winter realized what was going on.
20 hxg5 hxg5 21 b3 c6!

No hurry. Black should be able to recapture with a pawn on b5 in order to keep controlling the light squares, such as a4. In contrast, after 21...b5?! 22 axb5 axb5 23 a4 a4 b4 24 a4 a4 it will be much more difficult to progress on the queenside.
22 a2 b5 23 a1

23...c4!

A decisive breakthrough that splits the white pawns and activates the black pieces.
24 axb5

Or 24 dxc4 bxc4 25 bxc4 a4 followed by ...a8 and ...xc4.
24...cxb3 25 cxb3 a4

Now it becomes evident that with such a passive bishop White won’t be able to resist on the queenside.
26 a4 a8b3 27 d4 a5 28 c4 a4 29 xxc6 xd4 0-1

Example 165
V.Malakhov-M.Narciso Dublan
Spanish Team Championship 2004

The reduced number of pieces and the
symmetrical pawn structure might suggest a quick draw, but as we will see next, this is not what Malakhov has in mind.

\[ \begin{align*}
17 & \text{f3!} \\
& \text{Preparing e3-e4 in order to gain space and restrict the enemy pieces.} \\
17 & \text{...c8?!} \\
& \text{This deployment of the rooks leaves the d-file in White's hands. Preferable seems 17...h8! 18 e4 c7 19 ac1 ac8 with just a slight white advantage – Huzman.} \\
18 & \text{e4!} \\
& \text{This advance doesn't just create the threat of 19 e5, it also takes the important d5-square under control. Moreover, the range of the bishop on b7 is limited for the rest of the game.} \\
18 & \text{c7} \\
& \text{The active 18...c2?! backfires after 19 f1 c7 20 d4 with the threat of 21 b4.} \\
19 & \text{ac1} \\
& \text{The last piece enters the game. Note that 19 e5? is not on White's agenda - the pawn chain g2-f3-e4 should remain intact in order to limit the scope of Black's pieces.} \\
19 & \text{g6} \\
& \text{Preparing 20...d7 to improve the queenside defence, but White’s strong reply prevents this idea.} \\
20 & \text{e5! b5} \\
\end{align*} \]

Parrying the threat of 21 a3+ e8 22 c4, heading for d6.

\[ \begin{align*}
21 & \text{a4!} \\
& \text{Malakhov clears the f1-a6 diagonal for his bishop towards the future target on a6, and also liberates the c4-square for his knight.} \\
21 & \text{...xe5?} \\
& \text{5 swapping his best minor piece and indirectly surrendering the dark squares. For better or worse 21...b6+ 22 f1 b4 23 c4 c7 had to be tried – Huzman.} \\
22 & \text{xe5 bxa4 23 bxa4 c6} \\
& \text{After 23...xc1 24 xc1 e8 25 a5!, preparing b1-b6, Black is in big trouble.} \\
24 & \text{d6+ e8 25 d4!} \\
& \text{Preparing dgc4 with increased pressure. Less technical is 25 a5?! b5! and the bad bishop leaves the board.} \\
25 & \text{d7 26 dc4 b7 27 c7!} \\
& \text{Usually, when a rook seizes the seventh rank it targets the opponent’s pawns, but on this occasion it is the black bishop that gets exposed.} \\
27 & \text{d8 28 a5!} \\
& \text{Preparing a decisive bishop transfer to a4. Being completely tied up, Black can’t stop this plan.} \\
28 & \text{ab8 29 d1 a8 30 a4} \\
& \text{White soon won.} \\
\end{align*} \]
Example 166
Y.Balashov-B.Gulko
USSR Championship, Moscow 1976

Due to the imprisoned bishop on h8.
21...f8 22 f4!

Balashov wisely starts all over again, after seeing that 22 f6? xf6 23 exf6 d5 would let Black get rid of his bad bishop.
22...c2?!

22...d5 was preferable, although after
23 dx5 exd5 24 g5 e8 25 h4 e6 26 c1 White remains clearly on top – Belov.
23 d2!

This practically wins a pawn and also produces exchanges, which will make the inferiority of the bishop on h8 even more notable.
23...a5 24 xb4+ axb4 25 xc2 xc2 26 wb3! wc7 27 xb4+ g8 28 a4

Black has just played ...b7-e4, parrying any immediate threats to his king, e.g. 19 dx6? f5. What should White do now?
19 h6!

It might seem illogical to close the flank where you are attacking, but Balashov has anticipated that, by tactical means, he can force the bishop to h8, where it will become terribly restricted. We saw a similar idea in Kuporosov-Panchenko.
19...f5

Not 19...h6? 20 h5! with multiple threats.
20 wg3 h8

A sad place for the bishop, but both 20 f8 21 h5! h8 22 g5 and 20 h6 21 h5 g7 22 xg7 xg7 23 wg5 led to a strong white attack on the dark squares.
21 h5

21 d5!? was an interesting alternative, when 21...xe5? fails to 22 dxe6, while 21 exd5 22 xd5 xd5 23 xd5, followed by f2-f4, leads to a difficult game for Black.

White is basically winning. The game concluded 28 c4 29 wb5 f8 30 dc2 d5 31 wb3 e8 32 h1 d8 33 fd1 c2 34 bc1! c8 35 xc2 xc2 36 wb5+ and Black resigned in view of 36...wc6 37 c1 xb5 38 xc8+ d7 39 axb5 xc8 40 f4 with a lost endgame.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 343.

Prophylaxis
Sometimes the enemy plans simply can't be prevented, and we should rather take meas-
ures to be able to meet them in the best possible way. This idea, referred to in this book with the specific term prophylaxis, has appeared several times in the previous games; for example, in Van Wely-Salov, p. 131 (15...e6! as a preparation to the potential 16 a4) and Karpov-Gligoric, p. 134 (38 g8 in view of the threat 39 f6+). Let’s see some more examples of this idea.

**Example 167**

*M. Tal-A. Koblenz*

Riga 1954

Black has just played ...d8-e7, unpinning the bishop on d7. Tal easily predicts the opponent’s intention, ...d7-c6, and takes prophylactic measures.

24 xe2! c6 25 f3

The exchange of bishops will put an end to Black’s attacking ambitions and emphasize the problem of his unstable king.

25...xf3 26 xf3 d8

In the event of 26...0-0 White can choose between the simple 27 f3, just like in the game, and the more aggressive 27 g3.

27 f3 d3 28 d3 wc7

Or 28...0-0 29 wd2 with the unpleasant threat of 30 d7.

29 cc3 wd7 30 wc1!

With the double intention of 31 cc8+ and 31 cc7.

30...0-0 31 c7 wd5

This drops a pawn, but after 31...d3 32 e1! g3 33 xg3+ hxg3 34 cc3 or 32...xa3 33 xh4 xb4 34 g5+ h8 35 h4 Black also has a difficult game.

32 e1! wd8 33 xb7

Tal soon converted his extra pawn into victory.

**Example 168**

*S. Sulskis-L. Gofshtein*

Lisbon 2001

White has just played a2-a4, preparing a4-a5 to soften up the enemy queenside, an idea familiar to us from Salov-Karpov.

12...db8!

Vacating a retreat square on a8 for the bishop. The alternatives were all inferior: after 12...0-0?! 13 a5 bxa5 14 a5 Black loses the bishop pair, while 12...c5?! 13 a5 cxe4 14 xe4 xe4 15 axb6, followed by a5, yields White a dangerous initiative on the queenside. Finally, the “restrictive” 12...a5?! would leave a protected square for the white knights on b5.
13 a5 bxa5 14 bxax5 4 a8
By simple prophylaxis Black has secured his bishop. Now the control of the semi-open b-file and the pressure along the h1-a8 diagonal compensate for the slight weaknesses on a5 and a6.
15 b3 b7
Also reasonable is 15...c8, not repeating.
16 b2 0-0 17 b4 d5!
A typical Hedgehog counter-strike.
18 cxd5 b4 c4 19 b4 e5 20 e4 4 e4!
Black has an active game.

Example 169
S.Dolmatov-R.Hernandez Onna
Amsterdam 1979

Here is a more complex example. A careful look at the board reveals that Black has two concrete intentions: 40...h7 followed by ...h8 with an attack on the h-file; and 40...a8 to seize the a-file.
40 c1!
This queen move gets White ready to meet both plans. Also good are 40 e1 or 40 d1 in the same spirit.
40 h7
After 40...a8 41 a1! it is White who wins the battle for the a-file.
41 h1!
This queen exchange finishes off Black's attack and lands him in a difficult endgame due the active white rook.
41...4xh1+ 42 xh1 f8
Or 42...b4?! 43 d2! bxc3 44 xc3 and the c4-pawn is doomed.
43 4g1 g7 44 f2
Preparing f1-h3. Both here and on the next move, the premature 44 f1 permits 44...g4! - Dvoretsky.
44 f5 45 d2!
By withdrawing the bishop before Black goes ...f5-f4, White gains some extra flexibility.
45 f4 46 f1 c8 47 a5!
A typical restrictive measure in endgames, stopping the plan of ...b6-a4.
47...e7 48 h3 d8 49 e6 h8 50 g2

Preparing h3-g4-f5. Dolmatov later converted his superior activity into victory.

Example 170
J.Polgar-I.Smirin
Istanbul Olympiad 2000

Prophylaxis is often associated with defensive play, but it can also be used in the
attack, as we will see in this example. Black has just played ...\texttt{Wd8-e8}. What might be his intention?

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_game.png}
\end{center}

A common task for prophylactic measures is to reinforce (or “overprotect”) one’s own vulnerable points. This idea already appeared several times in the book; e.g. $\texttt{Kf1-e2}$ in Gufeld-Kolarov (p. 32), 27 $\texttt{Ke2}$ in Hellsten-Berrocal (p. 91) and 30...$\texttt{Qf8}$ in Ivanchuk-Leko (p. 142). Here are more examples.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Example 171}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
P.Carlsson-F.Vallejo Pons
Calvia 2005
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_game2.png}
\end{center}

17 $\texttt{Wh3!}$

Polgar withdraws her queen in advance, after seeing that the natural 17 $\texttt{Qd3}$? runs into 17...$\texttt{f5!}$ thwarting the white attack; e.g. 18 $\texttt{Wh3}$ $\texttt{Wg6}$ 19 $\texttt{Qh4}$ $\texttt{Wg4}$ and Black has no problems.

17...$\texttt{h6}$

Thanks to the previous prophylaxis 17...$\texttt{f5}$? can now be met by 18 $\texttt{Qc4+!}$ $\texttt{Wh8}$ 19 $\texttt{Qe6}$, while 17...$\texttt{dx5}$ permits the nice combination 18 $\texttt{Qg5!}$ $\texttt{h6}$ 19 $\texttt{Wf5!}$ $\texttt{hxg5}$ 20 $\texttt{Qd3}$ $\texttt{f6}$ 21 $\texttt{Wh7+}$ $\texttt{Qf7}$ 22 $\texttt{Qg6+}$ $\texttt{Qe6}$ 23 $\texttt{f5}$ mate – Finkel.

18 $\texttt{Qd3}$

This move is now well timed and creates the threat of $\texttt{Wf5}$.

18...$\texttt{Qb4}$ 19 $\texttt{Qe4}$ $\texttt{e6}$ 20 $\texttt{f5}$!

With the threat of 21 $\texttt{f6}$ $\texttt{Qxf6}$ 22 $\texttt{Wh6}$. Black has to pin his last hopes on a counterattack.

20...$\texttt{Qxc3}$ 21 $\texttt{f6!}$ $\texttt{Wb5}$

Or 21...$\texttt{Wa4}$ 22 $\texttt{bxc3}$ $\texttt{Qxa2+}$ 23 $\texttt{Qb2}$ $\texttt{Qxc3}$ 24 $\texttt{Qd4}$ and wins – Polgar.

22 $\texttt{Wg3!}$

After 22...$\texttt{Qxc2+}$ 23 $\texttt{Qxc2}$ $\texttt{Qxa2+}$ 24 $\texttt{Qd2}$ $\texttt{Wb4+}$ 25 $\texttt{Qe2}$ the king soon escapes, so Black resigned.

In a Sicilian battle Black applied a clever prophylactic measure before carrying on with his own play.

21...$\texttt{Qe7}$!

Overprotecting the $\texttt{f7}$-pawn. In contrast, the immediate 21...$\texttt{Wb8?!}$ permits 22 $\texttt{f5!}$ $\texttt{exf5}$ 23 $\texttt{c5}$ with an attack on that pawn.

22 $\texttt{Qc1}$ $\texttt{Wb8}$

Supporting a future $\texttt{...b6-b5}$ and heading for a8 at some moment in order to increase the pressure on $\texttt{e4}$. Meanwhile, the bishop on $\texttt{a2}$ has been reduced to a purely defensive function.

23 $\texttt{We3}$ $\texttt{Qf6}$ 24 $\texttt{Qc1}$

White also applies some overprotection.

The straightforward 24 $\texttt{Wh3?}$ failed to 24...$\texttt{h6}$ 25 $\texttt{Qf3}$ $\texttt{Qe4}$.
24...a8 25 h3

Preparing f2 to support the e4-pawn. If 25 f3, then 25...c5 26 b1 b5! with counterplay.

25...c8e8 26 c2e2

Providing the g2-pawn with some extra protection. The immediate 26 f2?! runs into 26...e5! with increased pressure on e4, now that 27 f5? fails to 27...gx5 28 exf5 xg2+ etc.

26...c5 27 b1g4 28 w3g3 f6 29 f2?! If 29 e3, repeating moves, then Black consider 29...g4 followed by f7-f5, or even 29...d5!, when both 30 cxd5? fxe4! 21 fxe4 exd5 and 30 e5 d4!? 31 wxd4 d7 32 wd1 f64 followed by...ed8 look excellent for him. Even so, this was probably a lesser evil for White.

29...h5 30 wh3 a2b3!

Example 172

G.Kasparov-V.Kramnik
World Championship (game 3), London 2000

In this typical position from the Berlin Spanish, you can easily find Black’s best move by asking yourself the usual question “what does my opponent want to do?”.

24 f8!

Defending the f7-pawn in advance. Now 25 d7 can be met by 25...c8. Much worse was 24 d4? 25 xd4 cxd4 26 xd4 xf6 27 d7 with a clear advantage for White – Kasparov.

25 e4 c8

Vallejo initiates an attack on the c4-pawn, exploiting the fact that most of White’s pieces are away on the other flank.

31 e3 a5! 32 a2 c8?! 33 wh4?

By 33 a4! White could have confused things a little, so 32...xc3 33 bxc3 xe4 was probably the correct choice on the previous move.

33...xf6 34 d4 xc4 35 xc4 xc4!

With a sound extra pawn Black went on to win the game.
26 f4?!

Preferable was 26 h4! d4 27 xd4 cxd4 28 dxe4 xf6 29 hxg5 hxg5 30 e5 with a more active rook endgame.

26...gxf4 27 xf4 e8

Now that the king controls d7 the rook can be used for active means.

28 c3?!

White should have preferred 28 d2, preventing e2; for example, 28...e6 29 g3 e5 30 xe5 xe5 31 g2 e6 32 df2 d7 with equality – Kasparov.

28...e2 29 f2 e4 30 h3 a5!

Intending a5-a4 with a slight initiative.

**Example 173**

A.Yusupov-P.Enders

German Championship, Bremen 1998

As we can see from the aggressive deployment of his queen and bishop along the b1-h7 diagonal, White is preparing an attack on the kingside. In response to this Black applies a clever prophylactic manoeuvre.

17...b8!

The knight is heading for f8 where it will reinforce the kingside defence, in particular the h7-square. This retreat also clears the h1-a8 diagonal for the bishop.

18 e3

Or 18 e5?! d5!, when both 19 g3 xc3 and 19 f3 a6 fail for White.

18...bd7 19 bh4 f8 20 h3

With the threat of 21 xh6 gxh6 22 d2!, unleashing a scary attack.

20...e4!

A powerful counter-strike based on White’s vulnerable back rank.

21 xe4?!

A lesser evil was 21 w5 a6 22 wb3 xB1 23 xB1 d5 with some advantage for Black due to the weaknesses on c3 and c4. In contrast, White’s attack has lost most of its potential after the departure of his light-squared bishop.

21...e4 22 xe4 xd4! 23 xd4

After 23 e1 d1 24 f1 a4! the threat of d1 is very strong, e.g. 25 d3 xd3 26 xd3 xh4 with a clear advantage – Knaak.

23...xd4 24 c2

24...xh4!

One more tactical twist, which practically decides the game.

25 xh4 xc3 26 e3 xc2

Black later realized his material advantage.
A piece with a natural need for prophylaxis is the king. In fact we just saw a few cases where weak points in the king's position were covered by his fellow pieces. However, the prophylaxis can also be performed by the king himself; e.g. by $\text{g}1$-$\text{h}1$ or ...$\text{g}8$-$\text{h}8$ as seen in Hellsten-Olesen, Guliev-Timman and Avrukh-Grigoriants. As for positions with long castling, a prophylactic $\text{c}1$-$\text{b}1$ or ...$\text{c}8$-$\text{b}8$ is even more frequent, and we saw one example in Timman-Kamsky, where both sides in fact carried out this idea. Here are a few other methods of royal prophylaxis.

Example 174
L.B.Hansen-S.Tiviakov
Istanbul Olympiad 2000

Most of White's pieces are directed at the enemy kingside, and next he might be planning 21 $\text{d}3$ with the worrying threat of 22 $\text{d}5$ exd5 23 $\text{x}f6$ $\text{xf}6$ 24 $\text{h}7+$ $\text{h}8$ 25 $\text{h}8$ mate. How should Black react to this?

20...$\text{f}8$!

Removing the king from the vulnerable g8-square in advance. A more active try like 20...$\text{g}4$?! permits 21 $\text{d}3 !$, intending

21...$\text{x}e3$ 22 fxe3 $\text{g}5$ 23 $\text{d}5 !$ exd5 24 $\text{h}7+$ $\text{f}8$ 25 $\text{f}5$ with a decisive attack.

21 $\text{d}3$ $\text{h}4$ 22 $\text{h}3$

Parrying the threat of 22...$\text{g}4$. Now the 22 $\text{d}5$ idea has lost considerable strength, since the queen no longer enters with check on h7; e.g. 22...exd5 23 $\text{x}f6$ $\text{g}x$6! 24 cxd5 $\text{xe}3$ 25 fxe3 $\text{d}7$ with an unclear game.

22...$\text{f}4$ 23 $\text{e}e1$ $\text{g}5$

Tying the white knight to the defence of g2 and preparing the next, strong move.

24 $\text{a}2$ b5!

A typical counter-strike against the hanging pawns, and one that we already saw in Aagaard-Åkesson (p. 201).

25 $\text{d}5$?

Since 25 cxb5?! $\text{x}b5$ or 25 c5?! $\text{ad}8$ produces a weak pawn on d4 and a strong base for the black pieces on d5, White goes for a pawn sacrifice.

25...bxc4 26 $\text{x}f6$ $\text{gxf}6$

After 26...$\text{xf}6$?! 27 $\text{xc}4$ Black would just have an additional worry about $\text{g}3$-$\text{h}5$.

27 $\text{xc}4$ $\text{xd}5$ 28 $\text{xd}5$ $\text{xd}5$

Safer than 28...$\text{ad}8$ 29 $\text{e}4$ $\text{xd}5$ 30 $\text{c}3$ – Wells.

29 $\text{xd}5$ exd5

Black's extra pawn yields him a slight advantage in the endgame.
Example 175
V.Akopian-J.Polgar
Merida 2000

As beginners we were told to secure our king from back rank mates by advancing a pawn in front. This idea remains frequent in practice at all levels. In the above position Black has a definite initiative thanks to the opponent’s stranded king in the centre. Before taking concrete action, Polgar applies some simple prophylaxis.

21...h6!

Creating a flight square on h7, something that will prove useful in any tactical context. In contrast, the active 21...c2?! 22 b3 a2 runs into 23 e5!, covering a1 and threatening mate, with counterplay.

22 d4?! 

This won’t end well, but it is was not easy for White to free himself. For example, if 22 b3, intending d2 and c1, then simply 22...xb3! 23 xb3 c1+ 24 d2 xh1 and Black wins the exchange, now that 25 b8+ can be parried by 25...h7.

22...g2 23 f1 d7! 

Perhaps Akopian overlooked this strong transfer of the bishop to h3.

24 f3 

Or 24 f3 h3 25 g1 c1+! 26 xc1 xg1+ and wins – Polgar.

24...d4!

A nice blow on the theme of deflection. Now both 25 xd4 c1+ and 25 xd4 h3 win.

25 f4 g5 26 xg5 

Hardly a correct sacrifice, but after 26 d2 e8 27 d3 g4 28 g1 c8 White ends up in a terribly passive position.

26...hxg5 27 xg5+ f8 28 h6+ e8 29 f3 

After 29 h8+ e7 30 h4+ f6 31 h7+ d6 the checks are over – Polgar.

29...c6! 

Winning the h2-pawn. The rest is easy.

30 f4 xh2 31 b8+ e7 32 d2 c2+! 

33 xc2 xe2+ 34 b3 xf1 35 b4+ e6 

White resigned.

Example 176
Kir.Georgiev-R.Dautov
Istanbul Olympiad 2000

In view of the weakness on d5, White has a slight but enduring edge. However, the pawn is immune for the moment, i.e. 26 xd5?? xd5 27 xd5 xd5! 28 xd5 a1+. Moreover, Black has a dangerous plan in ...c3 followed by ...a1.
26 g3!

A simple prophylactic measure. Georgiev moves his king from the vulnerable back rank to a safer place on g2. This is indeed a very common method in practice, one that we already saw in Anand-Adams (p. 62) and Spassky-Taimanov (p. 143), the latter actually in a much less tactical context.

26...wc3 27 xg2 xa2

A tempting move which lets Black swap the d5-pawn for the one on e3, but even so White retains an edge. The alternative was 27...xa1, when 28 wd2 xb3 29 xb4! wa2 30 xxa2 xxa2 31 xb6 a7 32 b5 followed by xd5 yields White some practical chances in a theoretically drawn endgame.

28 xd5 wc3 29 wc3! xd5

Here and on the next move, after 29...wxf3+ 30 xf3 xd5+ 31 xd5 xf8 32 xd6! White again obtains practical winning chances; e.g. 32...a6 33 b4 followed by 34 b5 or 32...b2 33 xb6 – Dautov.

30 xd5 we8

Now it is Black who has a back rank problem, e.g. 30...we7 31 we3!.

31 ed6 b5 32 wc6 wf8?

Black should have taken his last chance to enter a rook endgame by 32...xc6+! 33 xc6 ef8 – Dautov. Indeed, after 34 xb6 we7 35 xb5 b2 Black’s well-placed rook implies some chances for a draw.

33 xd7! b4 34 xb7

The activity of White’s major pieces has increased considerably.

34...g6 35 we4 wc5 36 we8+ wf8 37 we5

Preparing wf4 in order to tie up the black queen to the f7-pawn.

37...wa8??

A bad time-trouble error, but after 37...c2 38 wf4! h5 39 xb8! xc8 40 xb4 White had a stable edge. Now he achieves a decisive double threat.

38 wc7! xf2+ 39 xf2 wa2+ 40 xb3

Black resigned, not waiting for 41 xf4.

Nimzowitsch introduced the concept of mysterious rook moves, by which a rook is placed on a potentially open file. This idea is rather standard in today’s practice, and we already saw a related case in Lugovoi-Orlov (p. 66). Here is one more example.

Example 177
Zsu.Polgar-U.Bönsch
Dortmund 1990

White has employed the Exchange Variation with ge2 against the Queen’s
Gambit. Now she is planning e3-e4 with a strong pawn centre, an idea familiar to us from Hellsten-Soppe (p. 176). Black, on the other hand, would like to create counterplay by a timely ...c6-c5.

14...d6

Gambit. Giving some extra support to the d4-pawn and discouraging Black from ...c6-c5.

14...g6

Indeed, after 14...c5?! 15...xf6 xf6 16 dxc5 xe3 17 fxg6 White wins a pawn, thanks to the presence of the rook on d1.

15...f2 d6

On this occasion 15...c5 runs into 16 xg6 hxg6 17 dxc5 xc5 18 xd5, again winning a pawn — Polgar.

16 e4 dx e4 17 fx e4 g4 18 e5! c7

After 18...xf2? 19...xf2 f7-pawn falls.

19 c4!

Increasing the pressure on f7 and un-blocking the rook on d1 in order to safeguard the d4-pawn.

19...e7 20 h1

With the simple plan of g1 and h2-h3.

20...xf2+ 21 xf2 xd7 22 e4!

Heading for g5 or c5 with a strong attack. The game continued 22...f8 23 f3 e8 24 h5 h8 25 d3! h6 26 df3 xe5 27 dxe5 xe5 28 xf7! xf7 29 xf7 and Black resigned in view of 29...xf7 30 xf7

Another simple but useful prophylactic measure is the retreat of a piece just before it is threatened. We already came across this idea in a few earlier examples, such as Cabrilo-Ziatdinov with 32...a8 (p. 49) and Beliavsky-Yusupov with 24...e7 (p. 151). The main point of this idea is to gain more flexibility on our next move, as in the following example.

Example 178

R.Vera Gonzalez-P.Cramling

Las Palmas 1988
In this typical Benoni structure Black has just played ...a7-a6 with the apparent intention of ...b6-b5.

19 \textit{\textbf{f1}}

Retreating the bishop in advance. Now if Black goes ...b6-b5 anyway, then after a double capture on b5 White obtains the possibility of \textit{\textbf{a1-a7}}, a move that he obviously didn’t have at his disposal in the first place.

19...\textit{\textbf{ec8}}

Indeed, after 19...b5? 20 axb5 axb5 21 \textit{\textbf{a7}}! Black is in trouble; e.g. 21...b4 22 \textit{\textbf{eb5 ec8}} 23 e5!, intending 23...dxe5? 24 d6, or 21...c4 22 eb5 \textit{\textbf{h7}} 23 f4 with a clear advantage — Vera.

20 g3

White is in no hurry and makes a useful move on the other flank which enables \textit{\textbf{f1-h3}} at some moment.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

20...b5

The only chance for activity.

21 axb5 axb5 22 \textit{\textbf{a7}}! b4 23 \textit{\textbf{a4}}

Due to Black’s sensible 19th move, 23 \textit{\textbf{b5}}? no longer worked: 23...\textit{\textbf{xb5}} 24 \textit{\textbf{xb5 wb5}}.

23...\textit{\textbf{d8}} 24 e5!

A strong advance that clears the position for the bishop pair and softens up the c5-pawn.

24...\textit{\textbf{fxd5}}

Or 24...dxe5 25 d6 \textit{\textbf{e6}} 26 \textit{\textbf{c4}} with a clear edge — Vera.

25 \textit{\textbf{c4}}! dxe5 26 \textit{\textbf{wb3}}

A tempting choice, though the simple 26 \textit{\textbf{xc5}} might have been even stronger.

26...\textit{\textbf{a8}}! 27 \textit{\textbf{xa8 xa8}} 28 \textit{\textbf{d1 we8}}!

By means of some minor tactics Cramling avoids immediate defeat.

29 \textit{\textbf{xc5 eb6}} 30 \textit{\textbf{d3}}!

With the threat of 31 \textit{\textbf{xs6}}.

30...\textit{\textbf{h7}} 31 \textit{\textbf{xb4}}

Thanks to his bishop pair and potentially strong passed pawn, White keeps a stable advantage.

\textit{\textbf{Example 179}}

J.Timman-A.Karpov

London 1984

The same method of retreating a piece before it is threatened can be particularly powerful when applied to the king in a tactical context. Here White is trying to make his attack work by means of \textit{\textbf{a5+}} and a sacrifice on c6.

19...\textit{\textbf{a8}}!

An excellent prophylactic measure. By parrying the check on a5 in advance, Black
obtains a greater number of choices on his next move. Less clear is 19...d5 20 bishop e3 \(\text{b4+} 21 \text{f2, or} 19...g5 20 \text{xc6!} \text{dxc6} 21 \text{a5+} \) with huge complications.

20 h4

Preventing 20...g5. At this point 20 \(\text{a5?} \) fails outright to 20...\(\text{b4+!} \), winning a piece, since neither 21 \(\text{xb4} \text{w2} \) mate, nor 21 \(\text{d2} \text{xe5} \) work for White.

20...d5!

With his own king secured Black launches a strong counterattack on the stranded enemy king in the centre.

21 \(\text{e3} \)

If 21 \(\text{c2} \), 21...\(\text{xe5} \) 22 \(\text{xe5} \text{xe5}+ 23 \text{f2} \text{d6} 24 \text{xc6+} \text{a7} \) followed by 25 \(\text{f8+} \).

21...g5!

Anyway! Now the f-file is decisively cleared for the attack.

22 \(\text{hxd5} \text{b4+} 23 \text{f2} \text{h8}+ 24 \text{g2} \)

Or 24 \(\text{f4} \text{xe5} 25 \text{d4} \text{xf4+!} \) etc.

24...\(\text{xe5} \) 25 \(\text{xe5} \text{f3}+ 26 \text{h2} \text{f2}+ \)

In view of 27 \(\text{h3} \text{c8}+ 28 \text{g4} \text{f3}+, \) White resigned.

Here is a similar case from a later stage of the game. Despite the material balance White is much better due to the exposed enemy king; however, the straightforward 60 \(\text{d6} \) fails to 60...\(\text{e3}+ 61 \text{h2} \text{e5}+ \) saving a draw, and 60 \(\text{a7} \text{e3}+ \) is similar.

60 \(\text{h2}! \)

Securing the king from any checks in advance. Now the black rook can't move due to the mate on g7.

60...\(\text{c6} \)

The most tenacious choice. In contrast, the game saw 60...\(\text{c5}?! 61 \text{d3}! \) and Black resigned in view of 61...\(\text{f5} 62 \text{b3}+ \text{h8} 63 \text{b8}+ \text{f8} 64 \text{b2}+ \text{g8} 65 \text{g7} \) mate.

61 \(\text{a7} \)

After 61...\(\text{xe5}?! \text{xd7} 62 \text{xe5}+ \text{f8} 63 \text{h5} \) White should also be able to win, but the text is simpler.

61...\(\text{f6} \)

Black managed to defend against both threats at e5 and d8, but now White is able to simplify to a rook endgame with two extra pawns.

62 \(\text{a5}! \text{e6} 63 \text{xf6} \text{xf6} 64 \text{e5}+ \text{f7} 65 \text{xh5} \text{a6} 66 \text{f5}+ \text{g6} 67 \text{f2} \)

White wins rather easily by activating his king, while the rook defends the pawns – Golubev.

Example 180
N. Grandelius – I. Sokolov
Malmö 2009

For the related exercises, see page 347.

**Provocation**

A common idea within modern practice is to force the opponent to make undesirable moves. In the present book, this goes under the term *provocation*. From a strategical perspective, the cases with pawn moves are the most interesting to study, due to the greater long-term impact on the position. For example, the provocative measures can cause weak squares and weak pawns in the
opponent's camp, and also restrict his pieces. In the earlier section about creating weaknesses we saw several examples where the pawns themselves performed this task, for example by majority and minority attacks. In contrast, the following examples focus on provocation realized by the pieces.

Example 181
G.Hertneck-A.Karpov
German League 1994

![Chessboard Diagram]

White has just played 18 a4 preparing a4-a5 with a majority attack. Karpov finds the perfect antidote.

18...a6!

By attacking the c4-pawn, Black provokes b4-b5 which will convert the c5-square into a base for his pieces.

19 b5

After 19 Wa2?! Wfc8 the c4-pawn just gets in trouble, so Hertneck accepts the provocation.

19...b7 20 a5 h6

Black delays occupying the c5-square, so as not to obstruct his rooks, and resorts to some useful prophylaxis.

21 Ed1 Wfc8 22 h3

Or 22 b4 Wa4 23 e1 f5 with counterplay – Karpov.

22...d7

The knight glances at c5 and also overprotects the e5-pawn, thus enabling a future d6-d5 with a fight for the c-file.

23 d2 Ec5!

Leaving the enemy knight awkwardly placed on d2.

24 axb6 axb6 25 f3 e4! 26 fxe4

After 26 f4?! d6 27 Wd4 d7c5 Black is clearly better – Karpov. We saw a similar case with “neighbouring” protected squares in Sasanian-Ilyushin (p. 23).

26...xex4 27 xex4 xex4

Avoiding the doubtful 27...Wxe4?! 28 f3 Wxe3+ 29 f2 with some counterplay for the pawn.

28 g3 Wg6

Thanks to his light square grip Black has the better chances. The game saw 29 h2 d5! 30 Wac1 Wf6 31 Wf1 Ec5 32 cxd5 Exd5 33 Exc5 Exc5 and Karpov went on to win.

Example 182
F.Vallejo Pons-S.Karjakin
Dos Hermanas 2003

In this Hedgehog position Black has just
played ...g7-g6 in order to conclude his development by ...g7 and ...0-0.

14 d4!

An annoying reply. Now Black will either have to weaken his pawn structure by ...e6-e5, or suspend further development. Less convincing was 14 f4?! g7 15 f5 0-0 with a balanced game.

14...e5

Opting for the former. After 14...g8 15 cxd1 g7 16 e2, attacking d6, or 14...e5 15 f4 g3 16 xd3 16 gxd3! e5 17 fxe5 dxe5 18 f2, preparing d5, Black has some difficulties – Ftacnik.

15 e3 g7

16 d5

The first fruit of the provocative 14 d4 can be appreciated: a protected square on d5.

16...d8

Or 16...cxd5 17 cxd5, followed by ...e1, with strong pressure along the c-file.

17 h4!

An interesting advance. Vallejo has estimated that the kingside is where his advantage can be most easily increased. Now 17...h5?! 18 g5! just leads to new problems for Black, so he prefers to continue development.

17...0-0 18 h5 c5 19 h6! h8

19...xd3? failed to 20 hxg7 xg7 21 xxb6, but the alternative 19...f6 was probably a lesser evil – Ribli.

20 b4! d7

Due to the inclusion of h5-h6 and ...g7-h8, Black can’t reply 20...xd3? 21 xxb6 f4 due to 22 xd8 e2+ 23 h2 xg3 24 e7 mate, while 20...xd5 21 bxc5 b7 22 cxb6 is also bad for him. In conclusion, the natural 18...c5 seems to fail tactically.

21 g5!

Again White uses this bishop for provocative means. Now the double threat at d8 and e7 forces Black to a further weakening of his pawn structure by ...f7-f6, since the pin after 21...f6? 22 h4 would be fatal for him.
21...f6 22 e3 f7 23 e2!
A useful move that directs the bishop to the promising h3-c8 diagonal, and also clears the d-file for the major pieces towards the weak pawn on d6.
23...f8 24 d1 f5
Exposing the king, but Black’s position was difficult anyway.
25 exf5 gxf5 26 f4! xd5
Or 26...e4 27 h5 winning the exchange.
27 xd5 f6 28 d3 e4 29 h3!
This indirect attack on the f5-pawn finally breaks the black defence.
29...c8 30 h5 f6 31 xb6 xc4 32 fxe5 dxe5 33 xf5
The rest is easy.
33...c1+ 34 d1 xh6 35 e3! g7 36 f3 c3 37 h6
Black resigned.
The knight can also be useful in provoking unwanted moves from the opponent. Here is one example.

14...d6!
By attacking the c4-pawn Black aims at clearing the f1-a6 diagonal for his bishop. Less promising is 14...c5 15 dx5 bxc5 16 b5 b7 17 e3 with a slight white advantage – Almasi.
15 c5
15 b5? drops a pawn after 15...xb5 16 axb5 xb5, while the passive 15 d2 can be met by 15...f6, followed by 16...e4, renewing the fight for the c4-square.
15...e4
Just like in the previous two examples the “provocative” piece, after completing its mission, returns to its original square.
16 xb6
Also after 16 e3 bx5 17 bx5 c7, preparing ...e6-e5, Black has some initiative.
16...xb6 17 e3 f6!
Since the immediate 17...c5?! permits 18 dx5 bx5 19 b5 b7 20 a5, Almasi prepares it.
18 b3?!
18 ac1 seems preferable, leaving the a1-h8 diagonal.
18...e2! 19 d1 c5!
Producing a strong passed pawn that will be well assisted by the bishop on e2.
20 c2 c4 21 b2 b5!
Thus Black fixes a target on b4 and rules out any attempts with b4-b5 and d4-b4-c6.
22 axb5 c3 23 b3 e8?!
Opening a kingside front, although 23...c4 followed by 24...xb5 seemed much simpler.
24 h3 h5 25 h2 d2 26 a3?!
Correct was 26 a2 c4 27 a6 f7 with unclear play – Almasi.
26...xb5 27 f3 e2!
More provocation. Now White has either to weaken his pawn structure or expose his king.

Example 183
L.Portisch-Z.Almasi
Hungarian Team Championship
2001
28 \( \textsf{\#f2} \textsf{\#d3} \)

Thanks to his strong passed pawn Black is clearly better.

Now let’s see two examples where the provocation is carried out by a rook.

**Example 184**

Pr.Nikolic-L.Van Wely

Groningen 1993

In the above position White has a stable advantage thanks to his superior pawn structure, but how to increase it?

23 \( \textsf{\#h3} \)

Before installing the knight on c5, Niko-

lic provokes a new weakness on the kingside. The immediate 23 \( \textsf{\#c5} \) could be met by 23...\( \textsf{\#f7} \) 24 \( \textsf{\#h3} \)\( \textsf{\#h6} \) 25 \( \textsf{\#e1} \)\( \textsf{\#e8} \) with an inferior but solid position.

23...\( \textsf{\#g6} \)

Black is forced to weaken his dark squares, since after 23...\( \textsf{\#h6} \)?! 24 \( \textsf{\#xf6} \)\( \textsf{\#xf6} \) 25 \( \textsf{\#g6} \) he has a problem with the h6-pawn – Van Wely.

24 \( \textsf{\#c5} \) \( \textsf{\#d6} \) 25 \( \textsf{\#d3} \) \( \textsf{\#f8} \)

Sensibly integrating both rooks in the kingside defence.

26 \( \textsf{\#e1} \)

Here and on the next move, 26 \( \textsf{\#xb5} \)!! permits 26...\( \textsf{\#xd4} \) 27 \( \textsf{\#e4} \) \( \textsf{\#b6} \) and Black liberates himself.

26...\( \textsf{\#ae8} \) 27 \( \textsf{\#f3} \)

The rook had fulfilled its function on h3 and now exerts pressure along the f-file.

27...\( \textsf{\#c6} \) 28 \( \textsf{\#h6} \)

A strong move that leaves Black with a dilemma: if he swaps bishops then the dark squares are eternally weakened, whereas if he doesn’t, then a future white attack is enhanced by the bishop on h6.

28...\( \textsf{\#f7} \)

After 28...\( \textsf{\#g7} \) 29 \( \textsf{\#xg7} \) \( \textsf{\#xf3} \) 30 \( \textsf{\#xf3} \) \( \textsf{\#xg7} \) White also keeps the advantage, but the black king would have felt safer than in the game.

29 \( \textsf{\#g3} \)

Preparing h4-h5 with a majority attack. The continuation of this game was featured in the earlier section on creating weaknesses (see Example 122).

**Example 185**

La.Karlsson-J.Hellsten

Swedish Team Championship

1995

In this Slav-like position it is far from
evident how to proceed with White. If 18 e5, clearing the h1-a8 diagonal for the bishop, then by 18...a5! Black fixes his queenside pawn structure in the best possible way, with ...f7-f6 and ...g7 as a further plan. On the other hand, 18 b4?! gaining some space and preventing ...a7-a5, runs into 18...b3! 19 axa7 axa7 20 exa7 ed2, recovering the pawn with a clear initiative. Karlsen finds a third and excellent option.

During the game I thought that the worst was over. White’s next move came like a cold shower.

22 db5!

Not just attacking a7, but also threatening 23 dc7, followed by captures on e8 and c6.

22...b3

Preparing 23...d3 to complicate the game. After 22...e6? 23 xb6! Black’s position collapses.

23 d4!

The most technical choice, in order to eliminate the active rook on b3. After 23 dc7?! d3 24 e2 h5 the game becomes unnecessarily complicated.

23...d3 24 e6a1

A good alternative was 24 xb3 xe1 25 e4!, trapping the knight.

24...xb2 25 xb2 e6b2

18 xa5!

Attacking the knight on c5, which can’t move due to the bishop hanging on h5. Thus Black is forced to reply 18...b6, which leaves him with a weakness on c6 and discards the aforementioned structure with pawns on a5, b7 and c6.

18...b6 19 xa2

White’s next step isn’t hard to predict: e4-e5 with an attack on c6.

19...d3?

A flawed attempt for counterplay. Equally bad was 19...a5? 20 e5 ac8 due to 21 ah3! ac7 22 g4, winning a piece. Instead, Black should have tried 19...f6 20 e5 ef7!, when both 21 xc6 xc4 and 21 b3 dc8 yield him chances for a successful defence.

20 e6 f6 21 e5 e8

26 xc6

Finally ruining the black queenside. 26 xc6?! xc6 27 xc6 ef7 is less convincing, when the absence of the white bishop pair gives Black more chances of survival.

26...xc6 27 xc6 ec8 28 d5+ ef8 29 xa7 xe5

Unfortunately, 29...xc4? failed to 30 e6!, when the black rook can’t cover the knight and the back rank at the same time.
30 fxe5
With a sound extra pawn and a strong bishop pair, White is winning.

Example 186
A.Yusupov-A.Shirov
Prague (rapid) 2002

20...a4!
Preparing ...a4-a3 in order to fix a target on a2 and soften up the c3-square for his own pieces.

21 ℄f1 a3 22 b3 ℄d8
Vacating the d5-square for the knight, from where it can reach c3.

23 ℄e4 ℄c3!

The queen also has a great provocative potential. In the position above White hasn’t really gained enough activity to compensate his isolated pawn, but that could change if he achieves ℄d3-h3(g3) with an attack.

16... ℄d5!
Provoking f2-f3, a move White is hardly ever happy to play in the current structure. It doesn’t just hamper a future kingside attack, it also weakens the dark squares surrounding his own king.

17 f3 b4
Now that there is no longer any need for defensive measures, Shirov initiates an attack himself on the queenside.

18 ℄e1 a5 19 ℄e3
Prophylaxis against ...∀b7-a6.

19...∀ac8 20 ∀g3?!
Overly passive. 20 ∀h4 must have been better.

20... ∀f6

This intermediate move creates some uncomfortable disorder in the enemy camp.

24 ℄d3?!
Practically dropping a pawn. After 24 ℄e2 ℄xe4 25 fxe4 ℄d6, followed by ...∀c7 and ...∀fc8, White is also suffering, but at least the material remains even.

24... ℄xe4 25 fxe4 ℄c2! 26 ℄e2
Or 26 ℄d2 ∀g5!, overloading the white queen.

26...∀g5 27 ℄f2
If 27 ℄f3, then 27...∀c1+ 28 ℄e1 f5! winning – Huzman.

27...∀c1+ 28 ℄e1 ℄xe4 29 ℄xc1 ℄xc1 30 ℄d1 ∀b2
With a sound extra pawn Black went on to win.

Provocative measures can also prove useful when attacking the enemy king. Here are two examples.
Example 187
M. Tal-K. Darga
USSR-West Germany match, Hamburg 1960

16...\texttt{We}2!

Perhaps Darga was only expecting 16 \texttt{Wh}6?!, when 16...\texttt{Qxe}5 17 \texttt{Qg}5 \texttt{Qxg}5 18 \texttt{Qxg}5 \texttt{fx}5! solves all his problems.

16...\texttt{c}5

If 16...\texttt{Qxe}5, then 17 \texttt{Rae}1 \texttt{Wb}6+ 18 \texttt{Wh}1 \texttt{Qd}7 19 \texttt{Qh}6 \texttt{Rfe}8 20 \texttt{Wf}3 \texttt{f}5 21 \texttt{Wc}3! \texttt{Qf}8 22 \texttt{Qxf}8 \texttt{Qxf}8 23 \texttt{Qd}6 with a clear initiative – Tal. The attempt to avoid this by 17...\texttt{f}6? fails to 18 \texttt{Qxf}6+, transposing to a clearly better endgame.

17 \texttt{Qf}6+ \texttt{Qxf}6

After 17...\texttt{W}8? 18 \texttt{Qxd}7 \texttt{Wxd}7 19 \texttt{Rae}1 \texttt{Wc}7 20 \texttt{Qh}6 the f7-pawn falls, so Black has to accept a further weakening of the dark squares.

18 \texttt{exf}6 \texttt{e}5

Or 18...\texttt{Wb}6?! 19 \texttt{Qxb}7 \texttt{Wxb}7 20 \texttt{Qd}6, preparing \texttt{We}3-h6 – Tal.

15 \texttt{Wh}5!

White has the more active position, but his e5-pawn is exposed and the liberating ...c6-c5 thrust must also be considered. How to proceed? The natural 15 \texttt{Qd}6 doesn’t yield much after 15...\texttt{Qxd}6 16 \texttt{exd}6 \texttt{Wb}6+ 17 \texttt{Wh}1 \texttt{c}5!, when Black manages to finish off the bishop pair while safely blocking the passed pawn. On the other hand, the prophylactic 15 \texttt{Wh}1?! permits 15...\texttt{c}5, when 16 \texttt{Qf}6+ fails to 16...\texttt{Qxf}6 17 \texttt{exf}6 \texttt{Qxg}2+ 18 \texttt{Qxg}2 \texttt{Wc}6+ etc.

15...\texttt{Qh}1!

At first sight a rather useless move, since Black can easily dislodge the queen by ...g7-g6. However, Tal has estimated that the ensuing weaknesses on f6 and h6 will enhance a further attack.

15...\texttt{g}6

After 15...\texttt{c}5? 16 \texttt{Qf}6+! White wins material; e.g. 16...\texttt{Qxf}6 17 \texttt{exf}6 \texttt{Qxf}6 18 \texttt{Qxc}7 \texttt{Qxh}5 19 \texttt{Qxb}7 \texttt{Rc}7 20 \texttt{Qf}3 – Tal. If Black improves this line by 15...\texttt{Wb}6+ 16 \texttt{Wh}1 \texttt{c}5, then after 17 \texttt{Rae}1 \texttt{Rd}8 18 \texttt{Qg}5 White keeps some initiative.

19 \texttt{Qxe}5!

Thanks to his strong pawn on f6, White’s dark-squared bishop is no longer essential in the attack. In contrast, the tempting 19 \texttt{Qxb}7?! \texttt{Wxb}7 20 \texttt{Qxe}5? \texttt{Rae}8 21 \texttt{Wf}3 failed to 21...\texttt{Qxe}5 22 \texttt{Wh}6 \texttt{Qxf}6!, repelling the attack.

19...\texttt{Qxe}5

Or 19...\texttt{Qxe}5 20 \texttt{Qxe}5 \texttt{Qxe}5 21 \texttt{Qxb}7 \texttt{Rab}8 22 \texttt{Qd}5 \texttt{Rxb}2 23 \texttt{Rae}1 with a clearly better endgame – Tal.
20 \( \text{Ax} \text{b7} \text{ Ab8} \)

After 20...\( \text{W} \text{x} \text{b7} \) 21 \( \text{W} \text{x} \text{e5} \text{ Fe8} \) 22 \( \text{W} \text{c3} \text{ Ee2} \text{ f2} \) White is simply a pawn up.

21 \( \text{A} \text{d5} \text{ Ab6} \)

In the event of 21...\( \text{A} \text{x} \text{b2} \) 22 \( \text{A} \text{ae1} \text{ d7} \), Tal had planned 23 \( \text{A} \text{x} \text{f7+}! \) \( \text{A} \text{x} \text{f7} \) 24 \( \text{W} \text{e8+} \) with a decisive 25 \( \text{A} \text{e7} \) on the next move.

22 \( \text{A} \text{ae1} \text{ d7} \text{ We7! c4} \)

If 23...\( \text{W} \text{d6} \), then simply 24 \( \text{A} \text{d1} \). In this and the previous note, the strength of the f6-pawn is striking.

24 \( \text{A} \text{h1} \)

The prophylactic king move, a subject familiar to us from the previous section. Now Black is fatally tied up.

24...\( \text{A} \text{x} \text{b2} \) 25 \( \text{Ee6!} \text{ Bb8} \) 26 \( \text{A} \text{d6} \text{ Bbd8} \) 27 \( \text{A} \text{d1} \)

In view of the inevitable 28 \( \text{Af3} \), Black resigned.

Example 188

E.Bacrot-A.Beliavsky

Enghien les Bains 1999

![Example Diagram]

Just like in the previous example White provokes ...\( g7-g6 \) with his queen, but for a different reason: to create a target for his h4-h5 advance.

16...\( \text{g6} \) 17 \( \text{Wg3} \)

The queen approaches the enemy king and avoids an annoying ...\( \text{c6-c5} \).

17...\( \text{h6} \)

After 17...\( \text{A} \text{d5} \) 18 \( \text{A} \text{ce4} \) Black can no longer play 18...\( \text{h6} \) due to 19 \( \text{A} \text{xe6!} \) – Atlas.

18 \( \text{A} \text{ge4} \text{ d5} \text{ f4} \)

Since the immediate 19 \( \text{h5?!} \) permits 19...\( \text{g5} \), Bacrot prepares it.

19...\( \text{A} \text{g7} \)

After 19...\( \text{h5?!} \) 20 \( \text{A} \text{e2} \text{ h8} \) 21 \( \text{A} \text{g5} \), with ideas like \( \text{A} \text{xh5} \), the black king is in danger.

20 \( \text{h5} \text{ g5} \)

Other moves can be met by 21 \( \text{A} \text{d3} \), stepping up the pressure on \( \text{g6} \).

21 \( \text{fxg5} \text{ xg5} \) 22 \( \text{A} \text{xd5} \text{ cxd5} \)

After 22...\( \text{exd5?!} \) 23 \( \text{A} \text{d6} \text{ c8} \) 24 \( \text{A} \text{d3} \), preparing 0-0, White has a promising attack, with \( \text{f5} \) as a base for his pieces.

23 \( \text{A} \text{xg5}! \)

Releasing the h-pawn, which will turn into a headache for Black during the rest of the game.

23...\( \text{Wxg5} \)

Beliavsky accepts an inferior endgame, aware that after 23...\( \text{hxg5} \) 24 \( \text{A} \text{d3} \), intend-
ing 0-0 and \( \text{Kf6} \), his king is unlikely to survive; e.g. 24...f5 25 exf6+ \( \text{Kxf6} \) 26 \( \text{Kf1} \) \( \text{Ke7} \) 27 \( \text{h6+!} \) \( \text{Kh8} \) 28 \( \text{Kd2!} \) with the dreadful threat of 29 \( \text{Kxe5} \).

24 \( \text{Kxg5+ hxg5} \) 25 \( \text{h6+} \) \( \text{Kh8} \) 26 \( \text{Kc1} \) \( \text{Kc8} \) 27 \( \text{Kxc8} \) \( \text{Kxc8} \)

Or 27...\( \text{Kxc8} \) 28 \( \text{Kd2} \), followed by \( \text{Kd3} \) and \( \text{Kf1} \), with a huge advantage. In the game Black manages to avoid this scenario by swapping the white e-pawn.

28 \( \text{Kd3} \) f5 29 exf6 \( \text{Kxf6} \) 30 \( \text{Kh5!} \) \( \text{Kf4} \) 31 \( \text{Kxg5} \) \( \text{Kxd4} \) 32 \( \text{Kd2} \)

Preparing \( \text{h6-h7} \) with a strong initiative in the endgame. The game concluded 32...\( \text{Kf4} \) 33 \( \text{Kd3} \) \( \text{ff6} \) 34 h7 \( \text{ff8} \) 35 \( \text{Kd4!} \) a6 36 \( \text{Kd5} \) \( \text{Kd7} \) 37 \( \text{Kd5} \) \( \text{Kb5} \) 38 \( \text{Kxe6} \) d4 39 \( \text{Kf7} \) \( \text{Kb8} \) 40 \( \text{Kd5} \) \( \text{Ke8+} \) 41 \( \text{Kf7} \) \( \text{Kc4} \) 42 \( \text{Kxe8} \) \( \text{Kxd5} \) 43 g4 and Black resigned in view of 43...\( \text{Kc4} \) 44 g5 \( \text{d3} \) 45 g6 \( \text{Kg7} \) 46 h8\text{\( \text{W+!} \) 47 \( \text{Kxh8} \) 47 \( \text{Kf8} \) – Atlas.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 350.
Chapter Six

Miscellaneous

This final chapter contains a mix of elements and concepts related to strategy.

Weak squares
The subject of weak squares is present in various parts of this book, especially in the section on improving the knight. Here we will continue the investigation, starting with two examples where the weak squares are exploited by other pieces.

Example 189
V.Kramnik-V.Zvjaginsev
Tilburg 1998

(see following diagram)
White is slightly better thanks to his more active pieces. A careful look also reveals that Black’s queenside is somewhat exposed on the dark squares, a fact that Kramnik exploits at once.

25...g6?!
Zvjaginsev avoids a future knight transfer to f5, but more to the point was 25...d6!, preventing 26 b4. White could react by 26 xe8 xe8 27 xe8+ xe8 28 e3 d7 29 a5 with a pleasant advantage, but not as big as in the game. In contrast, 25...c4?! was inadvisable on account of 25 xc4 dxc4 26 d5 with a strong passed pawn.

26 b4! d7
Or 26 xe3 27 xe3 d8 28 g4!, eyeing both h6 and e5.
27 \(\text{b}5!\)

Swapping the opponent’s bad bishop, but with a good reason: to win the a4-pawn.

27...\(\text{axb}3\) 28 \(\text{axe}3\) \(\text{f}6\)

If 28...\(\text{g}6\), holding on to the pawn, then after 29 \(\text{g}4\) \(\text{g}7\) 30 \(\text{x}c6\) bxc6 31 \(\text{w}e7\) or 31 \(\text{w}c5\) Black is under strong pressure. 28...\(\text{a}7\)? 29 \(\text{xd}5\) is even worse.

29 \(\text{xa}4\) \(\text{xa}4\) 30 \(\text{wa}4\) \(\text{e}8\)

Preparing ...\(\text{e}4\) with some minimal compensation for the pawn.

31 \(\text{wd}1\) \(\text{e}4\) 32 \(\text{g}4!\)

White is obviously happy to exchange pieces.

32...\(\text{axg}4\) 33 \(\text{hxg}4\) \(\text{hf}4\) 34 \(\text{g}3\) \(\text{hf}6\) 35 \(\text{wb}3??\)

More technical was 35 \(\text{e}5\) \(\text{a}6\) 36 \(\text{w}e2\) – Kramnik.

35...\(\text{w}d8?\)

Black, on his part, misses the stronger 35...\(\text{wc}8!\), intending 36 \(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{wc}2\) with counterplay.

36 \(\text{xb}7\) \(\text{xb}6\)

37 \(\text{we}8+!\)

This tactic forces a decisive exchange combination. The game concluded 37...\(\text{wxe}8\) 38 \(\text{xb}6\) \(\text{we}1+\) 39 \(\text{g}2\) \(\text{we}4+\) 40 \(\text{wh}2\) \(\text{g}7\) 41 \(\text{we}7?!\) and Black resigned in view of 41...\(\text{xd}4\) 42 \(\text{wc}3!\) or 41...\(\text{we}2\) 42 \(\text{we}5++.\)

**Example 190**

J.Hellsten-R.Sagit
Swedish Championship, Gothenburg 2006

Despite a minimal material deficit Black has a comfortable game. His minor pieces are well placed and after a move like 34...\(\text{we}5\) or even 34...\(\text{g}5!??\), gaining some space, it will not be easy for White to progress. However, my opponent fell for a more active continuation.

34...\(\text{e}5??\)

Intending the advance ...\(\text{e}5\)-\(\text{e}4\) followed by ...\(\text{d}7\)-\(\text{e}5\), but the big flaw of this plan is that White gains a protected square for his pieces on d5, one that I will exploit to the maximum.

35 \(\text{d}5!\) \(\text{e}4\) 36 \(\text{c}4\)

A great diagonal for the bishop. Perhaps Sagit only at this point realized that 36...\(\text{d}7??\) drops a piece to 37 \(\text{g}4\).

36...\(\text{h}3\) 37 \(\text{d}5!\)

Improving the rook and vacating d1 for its colleague.

37...\(\text{c}3\)

The bishop is mobilized to the kingside defence. This time 37...\(\text{d}7\) runs into 38 \(\text{d}1\) \(\text{f}6\) 39 \(\text{d}8+\) \(\text{xd}8\) 40 \(\text{xd}8+\) \(\text{h}7\) 41
Mastering Chess Strategy

\( \text{\texttt{xf7}}, \text{ when } 41...g4? \text{ fails to } 42 \text{g8+}. \)
\( 38 \text{bd1 \texttt{f6} 39 \texttt{d6!}} \)

In a typical Benoni position White is just about to dislodge the knight on e5 by f3-f4. Petrosian finds a timely antidote. 15...c4!

Preparing ...c5 with focus on the d3-square. The fact that White can now win a pawn is less relevant. 16 f4?!

With hindsight 16 \texttt{e3}, preparing \texttt{d2} and \texttt{c1}, was a safer choice. There can follow 16...c5 17 \texttt{d2} c3! 18 bxc3 bxc3 and Black keeps the initiative. In contrast, 17...\texttt{cd3}?! permits the exchange sacrifice 18 \texttt{xd3} \texttt{xd3} 19 \texttt{xc4}! \texttt{xe1} 20 \texttt{xe1} when the worst is over for White.

16...\texttt{d3} 17 \texttt{xd3} \texttt{cxd3} 18 \texttt{xd3} \texttt{c5} 19 \texttt{xe1} 20 \texttt{xe1}

White has won a pawn, but now he is faced with the strong plan of ...\texttt{a6} and ...

19 \texttt{d1 a6} 20 \texttt{f1}

Returning the pawn in order to parry the enemy plan. After 20 \texttt{e3 c8}! Black's activity is overwhelming, e.g. 21 \texttt{d2? d4} or 21 \texttt{h1 d3}!

20...\texttt{xe4!} 21 \texttt{xa6 b6+} 22 \texttt{e3 xa6}

An annoying move for Black, whose bishop can't move due to the threat at g6. At the same time the d5-square is vacated for the other rook.

39...\texttt{b7}

In time trouble Sagit gives up a pawn in order to renew the idea of ...\texttt{d7-e5}. Passive defence was equally unsuccessful; e.g. 39...\texttt{f5} 40 \texttt{c6l}, heading for c7, when 40...\texttt{e5} 41 \texttt{d5} leaves Black practically in zugzwang. It is rather striking that in just a few moves three white pieces have used the d5-square.

40 \texttt{d5 e7} 41 \texttt{xb6 \texttt{d7} 42 \texttt{b7 e5} 43 \texttt{xe4}}

White is winning.

43...\texttt{g4} 44 \texttt{b8+ h7} 45 \texttt{xd4!}

The most aesthetic choice, though 45 \texttt{dd8 \texttt{xh2+} 46 \texttt{f1 \texttt{h3+} 47 \texttt{g2}} also worked.

45...\texttt{xd4} 46 \texttt{dd8 e8}

Or if instead 46...\texttt{h6} 47 \texttt{h8+ \texttt{g5} 48 h4+ etc.}

47 \texttt{xe8 \texttt{d8} 48 \texttt{xd8 h6} 49 \texttt{h4 1-0}}

Sometimes the exploitation of a weak square can justify minor sacrifices, as in the following two examples.

Example 191
Z.Milev-T.V.Petrosian
Bucharest 1953
White has ended up with a very difficult position, and his next move just accelerates the end.

23 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textdegree}d4?}} \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}d4+ 24 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{w}}xd4 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}g3!}}} 25 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c}}3}}}}}

Or 25 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}e8+ \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}e8}}} 26 \textit{\texttt{hxg3 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}}1+}}} with mate to follow.

25...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b}}xc3}} 26 \textit{\texttt{hxg3 \textit{\texttt{c2!}}}}
The rest is easy.

27 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf2}}} 28 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{hac8}}} 28 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{a}}e3 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}}e3}}} 29 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{wxe3}}} 30 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c4}}}}}}}
White resigned.

\textit{\texttt{Example 192}}
\textit{\texttt{S.Lputian-I.Farago}}
\textit{\texttt{Yerevan 1982}}

Black has just played ...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{w}}e7-e4}} in the search for a queen exchange. However, Lputian has quite different intentions. A careful look at the black pawn structure will give a hint about his next move.

13 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textdegree}xd5!}}}  
A strong exchange sacrifice that will leave Black chronically weak on the light squares, in particular along the a2-g8 diagonal.

13...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{w}}xd5}}

Obviously 13...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf4+?!}}} 14 \textit{\texttt{e3}} doesn't make much sense, since Black is missing his light-squared bishop anyway.

14 \textit{\texttt{e3 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{w}}6}}}}

After 14...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}}c6}} 15 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c}}4 \textit{\texttt{w}}h5} 16 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}}d1}}} White enjoys strong pressure, while the destiny of Black's king remains uncertain. By the text Farago prepares to meet 15 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c}}4}} by 15...\textit{\texttt{d5}}; however, thanks to having played 14 \textit{\texttt{e3}} instead of 14 \textit{\texttt{e4}}, Lputian now finds yet another great diagonal for the bishop.

15 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textdegree}d3! \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c}}6}}}}}

Or 15...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d5}}} 16 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}}d1! \textit{\texttt{c6}}}} 17 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f}}f5 \textit{\texttt{w}}f7} 18 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{w}}a4!}} with a strong attack. The greedy 16 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xh7??}}}!, on the other hand, permits 16...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xh7!}}} 17 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{w}}xh7 \textit{\texttt{c6}}}, preparing ...0-0-0 with a normal battle.

16 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d1}}}}
The last piece enters the game, creating the threat of 17 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f5}}}. From now on the absence of the light-squared bishop is very strongly felt in Black's camp.

16...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d8}}}}

16...0-0-0?? obviously fails to 17 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{a}}6}} mate, while after 16...\textit{\texttt{g6} 17 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c}}4 \textit{\texttt{w}}e7} 18 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}}d6 \textit{\texttt{w}}g7} 19 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{w}}e4+ \textit{\texttt{e}}7} 20 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}}6!}}} White enjoys a strong attack.

17 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f5}}} 18 \textit{\texttt{c7 \textit{\texttt{g6}}}}}

After 18...\textit{\texttt{d5} 19 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xd8}}} 20 \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}}4!}}} Black also is in big trouble. In fact it is difficult to find an improvement for him in this whole example.
19 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{We}}4+!

Instead of recovering the exchange, Lputian continues the attack.

19...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{We}}7 20 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Xxd}}7+!

A key move, that breaks through the black defence. Incidentally, both 19...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ee}}7 and 19...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ee}}7 would have run into the same reply.

20...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{Axd}}7 21 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wxc}}6 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ag}}8 22 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ad}}6 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ag}}7

22...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wxd}}6 23 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Axd}}6 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Axd}}6 was a bit more tenacious, although 24 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wc}}8+! \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ad}}8 25 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{We}}6+ \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Af}}8 26 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wxf}}6+ \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ee}}8 27 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{We}}6+ \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ee}}8 28 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ag}}5 soon leads to a win for White.

23 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Axe}}6

Finally White regains the material, with interest.

23...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wxe}}6 24 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wxe}}6+ \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Age}}7 25 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wc}}6

Black resigned.

What methods are available when the weak square is on our own side? If possible, of course, we are happy to get rid of it, as in the following example.

\textbf{Example 193}
\textbf{Xie Jun-V.Filippov}
Shanghai 2000

As often in the Sicilian Sveshnikov the battle revolves around the d5-square.

22...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wb}}7!

By attacking the e4-pawn Black gets ready for the liberating ...d6-d5 advance.

23 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ed}}5

In the section on improving the knight we already observed that protected squares should be occupied by pieces, not by pawns, and the latter is indeed what is going to happen here. However, after 23 f3 d5! 24 exd5 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Exd}}5 White would lose any trace of an advantage; e.g. 25 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ed}}1? \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wa}}7! or 25 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Exd}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Exd}}5 26 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ad}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ed}}5 with complete equality.

23...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{Exd}}5

Black should hurry with these exchanges before White secures the d5-square by \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ed}}1.

24 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Exd}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Exd}}5 25 exd5?!

A lesser evil was 25 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wxd}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Wxd}}5 26 exd5, swapping the active black queen. Li Qun-V.Filippov, Shenyang 1999, continued 26...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ehf}}8 27 f4! \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ee}}7 28 fxe5 dxe5 29 c4 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Bdb}}8 30 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Ffa}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Bb}}4 31 b3 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Bxb}}3 32 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Bxa}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Bxa}}5 33 \textcolor{red}{\textsf{Bxa}}5 and the game was soon drawn. In contrast, the f2-f4 advance is less appealing with the black queen still on the board.

25...\textcolor{red}{\textsf{g}}6

Some prophylaxis, in order to improve the king and avoid any surprises on the
back rank. Black’s next plan is to put pressure on the white pawns along the b- and c-files.

26 f3! dxc8 27 h3?! 

27 b4? failed to 27...axb4 28 axa8 axa8 29 axa8+ wxa8 30 cxb4 wa1+ 31 wf1 wxf1+! 32 xf1 xf8 with a winning pawn endgame – Filippov; but 27 h4?! was a better try, followed by h4-h5 with some kingside activity.

Example 194
I. Ivanisevic-D. Solak
Belgrade 2002

An earlier f2-f4 advance cleared the f-file for White and activated his dark-squared bishop, but also yielded Black a protected square on e5. An interesting battle is to be expected.

16 b5!

Tying a black piece to the defence of the d6-pawn. In contrast, stereotypical play with 16 a1? permits 16 d7!, followed by ...e5, ...d7 and ...ae8, when only Black can be better.

16...d8

16...e8 takes the knight away from the desired d7-e5 route, and after 17 f3 d7 18 c3 h5 (preparing ...e5) 19 g5! d4+ (not 19...f6? 20 xf6 xf6 21 f1 etc) 20 h1 f6 21 h4, followed by a1, White has an evident initiative. Later on he could try to bring his knight to f3.

17 ae1

237
With the threat of 18 e5 which would win the battle for the e5-square.

17...\texttt{Qh5}

Black moves his knight from f6 before playing ...a7-a6, since 17...a6? fails to 18 \texttt{Qxd6} \texttt{Qxd6} 19 \texttt{Qxd6} \texttt{Qxd6} 20 e5 etc, while 17...\texttt{Qd7}? obviously leaves the d6-pawn undefended.

18 \texttt{h2} a6 19 \texttt{c3}

Now Black would like to swap bishops on e5 and later regroup the knight to this square, but unfortunately 19...\texttt{Qe5} 20 \texttt{Qxe5} \texttt{Qxe5}? fails tactically to 21 \texttt{Qxf7}. Thus Solak decides to prepare this plan by covering the f7-pawn with the king.

19...\texttt{d4+}

With hindsight 19...\texttt{Qe5} 20 \texttt{Qxe5} dxe5! was a lesser evil. Black gives up the plan of occupying e5 but manages to slow down the game; e.g. 21 \texttt{Qf3} \texttt{Qd7} 22 \texttt{Qef1} f6, preparing ...\texttt{Qf8} and ...\texttt{Qg7-e8-d6}, with an inferior but solid game.

20 \texttt{h1} \texttt{g7}

21 \texttt{Qf3}!

Ivanisevic starts exploiting the half-open f-file.

21...\texttt{Wg5}

Slower moves such as 21...\texttt{Qd7}?! run into 22 \texttt{Qef1} \texttt{Qf8} 23 g4! \texttt{Qf6} 24 e5! and Black’s position collapses.

22 \texttt{Qc2}

After 22 \texttt{Qxg5}?! \texttt{hxg5} 23 \texttt{Qef1} f6 24 g4 \texttt{Qf4} 25 \texttt{Qxf4} gxf4 26 \texttt{Qxf4} \texttt{Qe5} Black has a good compensation for the pawn – Ribli. As we will see later White, in fact, has nothing against a queen exchange, except on g5 which would create a safe square for the black knight on f4.

22...\texttt{Qe5}

23 g4!

A key move that leaves the enemy knight without a proper destiny. 23 \texttt{Qef1}?! was equally promising, when both 23...\texttt{Qf8} 24 g4 and 23...\texttt{Qg3}+ 24 \texttt{Qxg3} \texttt{Qxg3} 25 \texttt{Qxf7+} \texttt{Qg8} 26 e5!, followed by \texttt{Qxg6}, lead to big trouble. He would have to try 23...\texttt{Qxh2} 24 \texttt{Qxf7+} \texttt{Qg8} 25 \texttt{Qxh2} \texttt{Qe5+} 26 \texttt{Qg1} g5 with dubious compensation for the pawn.

23...\texttt{Wh4}

The only move, since both 23...\texttt{Qf4} and 23...\texttt{Qf6} run into 24 \texttt{Qef1}.

24 \texttt{Qf2}!

Thus White parries both threats of 24...\texttt{Qxe1} and 24...\texttt{Qxg4}, whereas the pressure along the f-file remains intact even after the queen exchange. In contrast, 24 \texttt{Qef1}?! permits 24...\texttt{Qxg4} 25 \texttt{Qxf7+} \texttt{Qg8} 26 \texttt{Qxg4} \texttt{Qg3}+! 27 \texttt{Qg1} \texttt{Qxf1} 28 \texttt{Qxf1} \texttt{Qd4+} 29 \texttt{Qg2} \texttt{Qf8} with considerable counterplay – Ribli.
24...\textit{xf2} 25 \textit{xf2} \textit{axh2}

Both 25...\textit{g3}+? 26 \textit{g2} and 25...\textit{d4}?! 26 \textit{f3} \textit{f6} 27 \textit{ef1}, preparing 28 \textit{e5}, lead Black into trouble, while 25...\textit{f6} runs into 26 \textit{xe5}! dxe5 27 \textit{ef1} \textit{d6} 28 b4!, destroying his blockade; e.g. 28...\textit{cxb4} 29 \textit{c5} \textit{d8} 30 \textit{a4} or 28...\textit{b6} 29 \textit{bxc5} bxc5 30 \textit{a4}.

26 \textit{exh2} \textit{f6}

Black is just one move from ...\textit{d7}, finally winning the battle for the e5-square. However...

27 \textit{e5}!

An appealing pawn sacrifice, which ruins the enemy plan of a blockade on e5 and frees the e4-square for White's own knight. In contrast, after 27 \textit{ef1}? \textit{d7} 28 \textit{xf7}+ \textit{g8}, followed by 29...\textit{e5}, the game is far from over.

27...\textit{dxe5} 28 \textit{ef1} \textit{d6}

Or 28...\textit{d7} 29 \textit{xf7}+ \textit{g8} 30 \textit{xg6} winning – Ribli. After the text Black just needs one tempo to consolidate by ...\textit{c8-d7}, but White has a neat finish prepared.

29 \textit{e4}! \textit{xe4} 30 \textit{xf7}+ \textit{g8} 31 \textit{f8}+ \textit{g7} 32 \textit{f7} mate

For the related exercises, see page 353.

\textbf{Weak pawns}

Basically, a pawn is weak when it can't be defended by a fellow pawn; but, just as in the case of weak squares, everything depends on the opponent's possibilities of attacking it, as well as other factors in the position. For example, in both Polgar-Anand and Geller-Sveshnikov Black had a backward pawn on d6, but his fate was hardly the same. Let's see some more examples.

\textbf{Example 195}

\textit{Pr.Nikolic-M.Adams}

\textit{Wijk aan Zee 2000}

A quick glance at the position reveals that Black has a weak pawn on c5, and another, less exposed one on a4.

23 \textit{a1}!

Aware of his long-term plus and the lack of black counterplay, Nikolic takes his time to cover the a2-pawn. Less appropriate was 23 a3?! \textit{b3}, when the bishop obtains a protected square on b3.

23...\textit{e5}

Adams tries to improves his pieces to the fullest extent. This move is useful to prevent e2-e4.

24 \textit{wc3} \textit{fd7} 25 \textit{e3}

Now 25 e4 was entirely possible, but White prefers a complete focus on the c5-pawn.
25...\texttt{b7} 26 \texttt{g2} \texttt{ab8} 27 \texttt{d2}
A useful move, which protects the \texttt{b2}-
pawn and enables the doubling of rooks on
the c- or d-file.

27...\texttt{f6} 28 \texttt{c1} \texttt{b6} 29 \texttt{dc2} \texttt{ed7}?! 
Preferable was 29...\texttt{c4} 30 \texttt{w5} \texttt{d5} 31 
\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5} with just a slight disadvantage - 
Gershon. Apparently the ...\texttt{c5-c4} advance 
has left the c-pawn a bit safer; for instance, 
on the previous move 31 \texttt{xc4}?! failed to 
31...\texttt{b4}.

30 \texttt{wa3}!
An excellent square for the queen, 
where she eyes both of Black’s weak pawns.

30...\texttt{aa8} 31 \texttt{ff1}!
Stepping up the pressure on \texttt{c5} and re-
grouping the knight to perform a more ac-
tive role in the game.

31...\texttt{a5} 32 \texttt{d2} \texttt{e5}
Adams gets rid of a potential target on 
\texttt{e6} and prepares \ldots\texttt{e5-e4}.

33 \texttt{e4}!
The straightforward 33 \texttt{c4}?! \texttt{xc4} 34 
\texttt{xc4} probably won a pawn, but Nikolic is 
still in no hurry. The text prevents any 
counterplay with \ldots\texttt{e5-e4} and prepares the 
seizure of the \texttt{h3-c8} diagonal.

33...\texttt{w8} 34 \texttt{h3}! \texttt{d8} 35 \texttt{f1}
A last prophylactic measure that re-
moves the knight from the vulnerable post
on the d-file. By now the \texttt{c5}-pawn is 
doomed; e.g. 35...\texttt{c8} 36 \texttt{e3} with the 
strong threat of 37 \texttt{c4}, so Black surrenders 
it.

35...\texttt{aa8} 36 \texttt{xc5} \texttt{xc5} 37 \texttt{wc5} \texttt{wc5}+ 38 
\texttt{xc5}
With a sound extra pawn and more ac-
tive pieces, the endgame is winning for 
White. There followed 38...\texttt{a6} 39 \texttt{e3} 
\texttt{ab8} 40 \texttt{a1c2} \texttt{d3} 41 \texttt{d2} \texttt{d4} 42 \texttt{e6}! 
(restricting the black knight) 42...\texttt{b1}?! 43 
\texttt{d1}! \texttt{xd1}+ 44 \texttt{xd1} \texttt{a3} 45 \texttt{c3} and Black 
resigned, since 45...\texttt{d3} 46 \texttt{b4} followed by 
\texttt{f2-e3} is hopeless for him.

\textbf{Example 196}
\textbf{M.Hebden-M.Illescas Cordoba}
\textbf{Andorra 1998}

An early e4-e5 advance has yielded 
White some space advantage and dark 
square control, that he would like to exploit 
by moves like 0-0-0 and \texttt{e4-d6}. On the 
other hand, in a long term perspective the 
same \texttt{e5}-pawn can be considered a weak-
ness.

12...\texttt{wb6}!
Taking the game closer to an endgame 
where the negative aspects of the \texttt{e5}-pawn
will become more tangible. In contrast, the tempting 12...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe}}c5?! permits 13 \textcolor{green}{\texttt{wg}}4 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{hxg}}3 14 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{hxg}}3!, preparing 0-0-0 and \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{ea}}4, with a strong initiative.

13 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{wx}}xb6

13 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{d}}c4?! fails to the annoying 13...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{a}}b4+!, while after 13 \textcolor{green}{\texttt{wg}}4 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{hxg}}3 14 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{hxg}}3 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{wb}}2 15 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{b}}b1 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{wc}}3 White hasn’t just lost a pawn, but also the option of long-castling.

13...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xb}}6

14 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{ae}}2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}}7!

From here the bishop puts some pressure on the e5-pawn, while the king will be well placed on e7 in this queenless middlegame.

15 0-0-0 \textcolor{green}{\texttt{ad}}7 16 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{he}}1

After 16 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{e}}e4 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{c}}c6 17 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{d}}d6+ \textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}}7 the e5-pawn is in danger, considering the threat of 18...\textcolor{orange}{\texttt{xg}}3 19 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{hxg}}3 \textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}4, followed by 20...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe}}5.

16...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{ae}}7 17 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{b}}b1 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{hd}}8 18 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{b}}3

Heading for a5. Again after 18 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{e}}e4 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{c}}c6 19 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{d}}d6 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{xg}}3 20 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{hxg}}3 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{d}}d7! White has a problem with the e5-pawn; e.g. 21 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{c}}c4 b5! 22 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{a}}a5 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{ae}}4+ 23 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}}d3 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{xf}}3 24 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{gxf}}3 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{xe}}5 with a sound extra pawn for Black.

18...\textcolor{orange}{\texttt{a}}a4 19 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{d}}d6?

Correct was 19 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xd}}8 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xd}}8 20 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{a}}a5 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{d}}d7 21 b3 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{b}}b5 22 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{xb}}5 axb5 and Black is just slightly better – Illiascas.

19...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xb}}3 20 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xb}}6

Perhaps Hebden only now discovered that after 20 axb3 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{d}}d7?! the e5-pawn is doomed; e.g. 21 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{ed}}1 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{xg}}3 22 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{hxg}}3 \textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}4! followed by 23...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe}}5. Thus he is forced to displace his rook and hand over the d-file to Black.

20...\textcolor{orange}{\texttt{d}}5 21 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}}1 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{ac}}8

Black’s pieces are much better placed than their white counterparts, and ...\textcolor{orange}{\texttt{xg}}3 followed by ...\textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}-\textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}4, exposing the e5-pawn, is in the air. Moreover, once the bishop leaves d5 White will be suffering on the d-file.

22 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{b}}b3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{c}}c6! 23 a4?! 

White should have tried 23 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{b}}b4 in order to stop ...\textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}5-\textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}4 and bring the rook back into the game.

23...\textcolor{orange}{\texttt{xg}}3

Before advancing ...\textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}5-\textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}4 the bishop must be swapped to avoid \textcolor{red}{\texttt{h}}4+.

24 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{fxg}}3

Hardly a desirable recapture, but after 24 \textcolor{brown}{\texttt{hxg}}3 \textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}4 25 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{h}}2 \textcolor{green}{\texttt{h}}5 the double threat of 26...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe}}2 and 26...\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{d}}2 is decisive.

24...\textcolor{green}{\texttt{g}}4 25 \textcolor{orange}{\texttt{h}}4

A terrible place for the knight, but the g2-pawn needed protection.

25...\textcolor{orange}{\texttt{d}}4!
With the threat of 26...\textbf{xe}4, besieging the e5-pawn. By now Black has an overwhelming advantage on the whole board, and the position plays itself. The game continued 26 \textbf{c}c2 a5 27 \textbf{b}b3 \textbf{c}cd8 28 h3 h5 29 hxg4 hxg4 30 \textbf{b}be3 \textbf{b}b4! 31 \textbf{e}e2 \textbf{d}d5! (zugzwang) 32 \textbf{e}e4 \textbf{xe}4 33 \textbf{xe}4 \textbf{d}d1+! 34 \textbf{xd}d1 \textbf{xe}4+ 35 \textbf{a}a2 \textbf{xe}5 with a quick win.

\textbf{Example 197}
\textbf{E.Rozentalis-K.Lie}
Gausdal 2007

Here is a case with multiple weak pawns. Despite the reduced material Black is in trouble due to his set of weak pawns on the sixth rank that need constant protection from his pieces.

\textbf{20 \textbf{xe}2!}

Preparing \textbf{ae}1 with pressure on the e6-pawn.

\textbf{20...g5}

After 20...\textbf{e}e8 21 \textbf{ae}1 Black will have to play 21...g5 anyway, considering the threat of 22 \textbf{h}h4.

\textbf{21 \textbf{ae}1 \textbf{e}e8 22 h4!}

Softening up the black kingside pawns for a future attack.

\textbf{22...g4}

Or 22...\textbf{f}4 23 \textbf{x}xf4 gxf4 24 \textbf{c}c4!, provoking ...d6-d5, after which the knight can settle on e5.

\textbf{23 \textbf{h}h2 h5?!}

This natural move makes White’s job a lot easier. 23...\textbf{bc}8 was more flexible, when 24 \textbf{f}1?! runs into 24...\textbf{h}5! with double threats at f4 and d4. A better try is 24 g3, covering the f4-square in advance; e.g. 24...\textbf{c}7 25 h5! \textbf{x}h5 26 \textbf{x}g4 or 24...\textbf{h}5 25 f3!, in both cases with some initiative.

\textbf{24 \textbf{f}1 \textbf{e}7 25 \textbf{c}c4!}

Limiting the movement of both enemy knights.

\textbf{25...\textbf{be}8 26 \textbf{g}3}

Now most of Black’s pieces are tied up to the defence of his pawns, whereas White could step up the pressure by \textbf{g}5 if needed.

\textbf{26...\textbf{b}6?}

This leads to unexpected tactical difficulties. 26...\textbf{c}7 was preferable, when 27 \textbf{b}b3 keeps the initiative – Barsky.

\textbf{27 \textbf{b}5! \textbf{b}d7}

Any rook move permits 28 \textbf{f}5! winning at least a pawn, while after 27...\textbf{fd}7 28 \textbf{e}4! the double threat of 29 \textbf{xd}6+ and 29 \textbf{g}5+ is more than Black can take. The text avoids any of these problems but runs into a new one.
28 \textbf{\textit{b4!}}  
The d6-pawn turns out to be undefendable.

\textbf{28...a6 29 \textit{\textbf{a4 1-0}}}  
Nothing changes after 29...\textit{b5 30 \textit{\textbf{b3}}.}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Example 198}
\textbf{Je.Hall-N.Hjelm}
\textbf{Stockholm 1986}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

In a typical position from the English Black has just played \ldots\textit{\textbf{\textit{e6-h3}} with focus on the enemy king. What about White's plans? A quick glance reveals that the weakest point in the black camp is the backward pawn on c7. Thus White's next move suggests itself.

\textbf{18 \textit{\textbf{f1-c1!  \textit{\textbf{xg2 19 \textit{\textbf{hxg2 f5 20 \textit{\textbf{c4!}}}}}}}  
A strong move that enables a tripling of the major pieces along the c-file, and also keeps an eye on the kingside defence.

\textbf{20...\textit{\textbf{f7}}}  
The brave 20...\textit{\textbf{gxd5?}} runs into 21 e4 \textit{\textbf{fxe4 22 dxe4 \textit{\textbf{wxf7 23 f3 \textit{\textbf{g6 24 \textit{\textbf{xc7 \textit{\textbf{xb3 25 xb3}}}}}}} with an overwhelming advantage -- Hall.

\textbf{21 \textbf{b1 \textit{\textbf{c8}}}  
Again 21...\textit{\textbf{xd5?}} fails to 22 e4, e.g. 22...\textit{\textbf{fxe4 23 dxe4 \textit{\textbf{f6 24 \textit{\textbf{xc7}} with material gains. But now the d5-pawn needs protection, which explains White's next move.

\textbf{22 e4 \textbf{\textit{\textbf{h7?!}}}  
Preferable was 22...\textit{\textbf{f4}, speeding up the attack. Here White could consider 23 \textit{\textbf{wc2 \textit{\textbf{xb5 24 \textit{\textbf{xd6 cxd6 25 \textit{\textbf{xc8+ \textit{\textbf{xc8 26 \textit{\textbf{xc8+ \textit{\textbf{h7 27 wc2 with some advantage thanks to his superior knight -- Hall.\textbf{ 23 \textbf{\textit{\textbf{c3!}}}}}  
Now the threat of 24 \textit{\textbf{wc2 proves inevitable.\textbf{ 23...h5 24 \textit{\textbf{wc2 \textit{\textbf{g8}}}  

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textbf{25 \textbf{c6!}}  
By means of the double threat of 26 \textit{\textbf{xd6 and 26 \textit{\textbf{xb6, White wins a pawn. In retrospect, these tactics would not have existed had Black managed to defend the c7-pawn horizontally with both rooks, but that was never practically possible.\textbf{ 25...\textit{\textbf{f8 26 \textit{\textbf{xb6 cxb6 27 \textit{\textbf{xc8 \textit{\textbf{xb5}}}}}}}}  
Black has managed to restore the material balance, but the following strong blow will leave him helpless on the dark squares.

\textbf{28 \textbf{xf8! \textit{\textbf{xf8 29 \textit{\textbf{xd6 \textit{\textbf{f7}}}}}}}}  
If 29...\textit{\textbf{e8, then 30 \textit{\textbf{wc7+ followed by \textit{\textbf{xxe5.}}}  
30 \textit{\textbf{xf3!}}  
The last piece joins the attack, with mortal effect.

\textbf{30...\textit{\textbf{d7 31 \textit{\textbf{xe5 e7 32 \textit{\textbf{g5+ \textit{\textbf{h6}}}}}}}}  

\textbf{243}
Or 32...g8 33 d6! with a decisive attack; e.g. 33...\textit{x}e5 34 c4+ g7 35 f7+ h6 36 h7+ xg5 37 f4+ and wins - Hall. 33 f7+ h7 34 d2 g8 35 g5+ h6 36 e6+

In view of 36...h7 37 f8 mate, Black resigned.

\textit{Example 199}
\textit{Art.Minasian-A.Kharlov}
\textit{Linares 1999}

A careful look at the position reveals several factors in White's favour: the backward pawn on b7, a weak square on b6, and a potential target on d6. In the following play, Minasian exploits these assets in impressive style.

20 a3!

The best diagonal for the bishop, on which it eyes the d6-pawn.

20...f6

Kharlov prepares ...f7 in order to reinforce the queenside defence. Instead, 20...f5?! would just activate the bishop on g2, while after 20...e7 21 b4! the black knight is forced to the unappealing c8-square.

21 b6!

As we already know, the side with a positional advantage is usually favoured by exchanges, which help him in reducing the opponent’s counterplay.

21...e7

Or 21...d7 22 c7!, insisting on the queen swap.

22 xd8 xd8 23 e2 f8 24 b6!

Since the natural 24 ab1 permits 24...a8!? 25 b6 a6 with some counterplay towards the a4-pawn, Minasian first seizes the a8-square.

24 b8 25 ab1 a6 26 b5 c5

As observed by Tiviakov, the ...b8-a6-c5 manoeuvre improved the knight but also left the a7-square without cover, a fact that White exploits within the next moves.

27 h1 g7 28 a5! b8 29 a7 d8

It is already difficult to find any reasonable plan for Black, whereas White still has various ways of improving his position.

30 a5! a6 31 d5 d7 32 b6!

By seizing the sixth rank Minasian finishes off the ...a6-c5 resource, and generates the tactical idea of c4-c5.

32 xd5

A concession, but it was not easy to suggest anything better; e.g. 32...g8 33 a8 g7 34 e8! and Black has to swap on d5 anyway.
33 exd5!
A dynamic recapture that enables the future clearance of the h1-a8 diagonal for the bishop on g2.

33...c5
This lets White speed up his plan, but a passive defence with 33...h7 proves equally hopeless after 34 e1! g7 35 f3 h7 36 d1, followed by 37 a4, finally conquering one of the weak pawns.

34 xc5 dxc5 35 d6!

Swapping the d6-pawn for the one on b7, in order to create an outside passed pawn on the a-file.

35...xd6
The intermediate 35...e4 was more tenacious, although after 36 xe4 xd6 37 d5 fe7+ 38 d1! the threat of 39 a6 can't be parried satisfactorily; e.g. 38...e5 39 e6! c7 40 f4 or 38...b8 39 a8 e5 40 f4 d6 41 a6! with similar consequences as in the game.

36 d5 fe7 37 a6! e8
Thanks to 36 d5, 37...bxa6 can be met by 38 axa6! c7 39 xf6 with an easy win.

38 xb7 xb7 39 xb7+ 1-0

Just as in the case of weak squares, occasionally weak pawns can be created and exploited by means of a positional sacrifice.

Here is one example.

**Example 200**

A.Vydeslaver-L.Psakhis
Israeli Championship, Ramat Aviv 1998

In a typical Sicilian battle White is preparing a kingside attack by g4-g5, while g5 followed by xf6 and d5 is another possible plan.

15...xc3!
A thematic exchange sacrifice that damages White's queenside pawn structure and undermines the crucial e4-pawn.

16 bxc3 c6
17  h5

Abandoning the e-pawn for the sake of counterplay, as after 17 d3 a8 that pawn is doomed anyway. There can follow 18 xg5 xe4 19 xg2 c8! 20 xfx6 xg2+ 21 xg2 xg2+ 22 xg2 g6x6? 23 xf3 c4!, when the rook doesn't just seize the whole fourth rank, but also rules out the a3-a4 resource. Next the king could join the battle via e8-e7-d7-c6, where it will support a future advance of the central pawns. Meanwhile, White's rooks are passive and his queenside weaknesses require constant protection.

17...xe4 18 xe7 xe7 19 f6

Other moves let Black consolidate by ...b7 and ...c8; for example, 19 e1 b7 or 19 f3 c8, when the slight material deficit is more than compensated by control of the long diagonal and the weak pawns on c2 and c3.

19...b7

The ideal square for the queen. Obviously 19...gxf6? failed to 20 g4+.

20 fxg7

20...c8!

Psakhis speeds up the attack on the white queenside and leaves the g7-pawn as a shield for his king.

21 g4?!

After 21 e2 c3 22 xc6 xc6+ 23 f3 xg7 Black has an excellent ending, but at least the white king feels safer than in the game.

21...d2!

The most powerful continuation, which helps to activate the rook. After 21...c3?! 22 xc6 xc6+ 23 g1 White obtains counterplay, with ideas like 24 xf7 followed by 25 f1+.

22 f2 xg2+ 23 xg2 xg2 24 g5

If 24 wb4 xc2 25 xd6?, then 25...xg2+! 26 e4+ and wins – Atlas. With the text White attacks the knight and at the same time prepares a perpetual on d8-g5, but both threats are easily parried.

24...e4! 25 wd8+ xg7 26 e1?

White had to unpins his rook by 26 g1, when one good reply is 26...c8!? 27 xh4 b6+, followed by 28 c4.

26...xc2?

Tempting, but 26...f2+ 27 g1 h3+! won on the spot; e.g. 28 f1 f3+ or 28 h1 xc2 with mate to come.

27 xh4

The only move, since both 27 xe4? c1+ and 27 xc2? f2+ 28 g1 h3+ 29 xg1 f3+ lead to mate.
Simple but strong, reinforcing the centralized knight. In contrast, after 27...\(\text{gxg2}\) 28 \(\text{hxh4}\) Black can’t avoid a perpetual on g5-d8 since his rook is hanging.

28 \(\text{hxh2+}\) 29 \(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{xe4}\)

With some powerful passed pawns, a tremendous knight in the centre and the safer king, Black’s position plays itself.

30 \(\text{g1}\) \(\text{d7}\) 31 \(\text{h5}\) \(\text{h6}\) 32 \(\text{d1}\) \(\text{g6}\) 33 \(\text{d5}\) \(\text{e6}\) 34 \(\text{c6}\) \(\text{a7+}\!\)

Centralizing the queen.

35 \(\text{g2}\) \(\text{d4}\) 36 \(\text{h3}\) \(\text{a5}\!\)

Since 37 \(\text{xb5}\)? fails to 37...\(\text{e4+}\), Black manages to create one more passed pawn.

37 \(\text{h2}\) \(\text{b4}\) 38 \(\text{axb4}\) \(\text{axb4}\) 39 \(\text{c4}\) \(\text{e4}\) 40

\(\text{w3}\) \(\text{h5}\!\)

Preparing ...\(\text{h5-h4}\) to expose the white king further and create a trio of passed pawns.

41 \(\text{c7}\) \(\text{d5}\) 42 \(\text{c6}\) \(\text{h4}\!\) 43 \(\text{gxh4}\) \(\text{f4}\) 44 \(\text{d1}\) \(\text{f5}\) 45 \(\text{e1}\) \(\text{e2+}\!\)

Of course not 45...\(\text{d4}\)! 46 \(\text{g5}\) mate. Also on the previous move 44...\(\text{d4}\)! was a blunder due to 45 \(\text{g4+}\).

46 \(\text{h1}\) \(\text{f3+}\) 47 \(\text{h2}\) \(\text{e2+}\) 48 \(\text{h1}\) \(\text{h5}\) 49

\(\text{g5+}\!\)

A sad necessity, as 49 \(\text{f2}\) \(\text{e4}\) was hopeless for White.

49...\(\text{w5}\) 50 \(\text{hxg5}\) \(\text{a5}\) \(\text{g5}\)

Now the passed pawns are much too strong for the rook. The game concluded 51 \(\text{b6}\) \(\text{d4}\) 52 \(\text{xb4}\) \(\text{d3}\) 53 \(\text{b8}\) \(\text{e4}\) 54 \(\text{g2}\) \(\text{d2}\) 55

\(\text{d8}\) \(\text{f3+}\) 56 \(\text{g3}\) \(\text{h5+}\) 57 \(\text{f2}\) \(\text{f4}\) 58 \(\text{f8}\!\)

\(\text{f6}\!\!\) and White resigned in view of 59

\(\text{xf6+}\) \(\text{e5}\!\)

Now let’s see a complete game on the topic of working on weak pawns and squares.

\textbf{Example 201}

\textbf{D.K. Johansen-U. Andersson}

\textit{Yerevan Olympiad 1996}

\textit{Sicilian Defence (B24)}

1 \(\text{e4}\) \(\text{c5}\) 2 \(\text{c3}\) \(\text{e6}\) 3 \(\text{ge2}\)

A flexible move order that lets White revert to a mainstream Sicilian by \(\text{d2-d4}\) if and when desired.

3...\(\text{f6}\) 4 \(\text{g3}\) \(\text{c6}\) 5 \(\text{g2}\) \(\text{e7}\) 6 0-0 0-0 7 \(\text{d4}\) \(\text{d6}\!\)

7...\(\text{cxd4}\) 8 \(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{d6}\) was possible, but Andersson prefers less explored terrain.

8 \(\text{e1}\) \(\text{d7}\) 9 \(\text{d5}\) \(\text{e5}\)

After 9...\(\text{exd5}\) 10 \(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 11 \(\text{wd5}\) \(\text{ae6}\) 12 \(\text{wd1}\), followed by \(\text{df4}\), White is slightly better thanks to his superior pawn structure. In contrast, the game continuation leaves the knight rather passive on \(\text{e2}\).

10 \(\text{h3}\) \(\text{e8}\)

A “mysterious” rook move. After 10...\(\text{b5}\!\)? 11 \(\text{f4}\), preparing \(\text{e4-e5}\), a sharper battle arises.

11 \(\text{a4}\) \(\text{a6}\) 12 \(\text{f4}\) \(\text{e6}\) 13 \(\text{e3}\!\!\)

This natural developing move soon proves to have undesired effects. 13 \(\text{dxe6}\) \(\text{fxe6}\) 14 \(\text{a5}\) was safer.

13...\(\text{exd5}\) 14 \(\text{exd5}\) \(\text{h5}\!\)

There was nothing wrong with 14...\(\text{b5}\!\), but the text prepares a clever positional trap that White falls into.
15 a5?
A natural move in order to prevent ...b7-b5, but 15 \( \text{Wd}2 \) protecting the bishop in advance was mandatory. Can you see why?

![Chess Diagram]

15...\( \text{Wc}8 \)!
A cold shower for White. Since 16 \( \text{Ah}2 \) runs into 16...h4! intending 17 g4? \( \text{Axg}4 \) 18 \( \text{hxg}4 \) \( \text{Axg}4 \+ \) followed by ...\( \text{Axe}3 \), he is now forced to an ugly weakening of his kingside.

16 h4 \( \text{Ad}8 \)!
Another key move, that unblocks the rook and eyes the exposed a5-pawn, which will turn into a headache for White during the rest of the game. The obvious 16...\( \text{Ag}4 \) can wait until a more optimal moment, a subject we talked about in Shamkovich-Benjamin (p. 126).

17 \( \text{Af}2 \) \( \text{Ac}7 \) 18 \( \text{Ac}1 \)
In view of the threat 18...\( \text{Wd}8 \), Johansen regroups his knight to b3.

18...\( \text{Exe}1+ \) 19 \( \text{Exe}1 \) \( \text{Ah}3 \) 20 \( \text{Ah}1 \)
Without help from this bishop the light squares on the kingside would quickly be rendered indefensible.

20...\( \text{Ae}7 \)!
The least active of Black’s minor pieces is directed to the excellent f5-square.

21 \( \text{Ad}3 \) \( \text{Ag}4 \) 22 \( \text{Wd}2 \) \( \text{Af}5 \)
A timely attack on the g3-pawn, so that White doesn’t manage to cover his light squares by 23 \( \text{Af}2 \).

23 \( \text{Af}2 \) \( \text{Wd}7 \)
With the simple idea of ...\( \text{Ae}8 \), taking up the battle for the open file. White can’t do the same thing with 24 \( \text{Ad}1 \) due to the problem with the a5-pawn. For this reason, he now clears the e1-a5 diagonal for the queen.

24 \( \text{De}4 \) \( \text{Xxe}4 \)
After 24...\( \text{Xxd}5 \)!! 25 \( \text{Dxc}5 \) dxc5 26 \( \text{Dxc}5 \) White recovers the piece with a far more pleasant position than in the game.

25 \( \text{Xxe}4 \) \( \text{Ae}8 \) 26 \( \text{Ad}1 \)

26...\( \text{Wa}4 \)!
A double attack that hurts. Now White has either to give up a pawn or swap his valuable light-squared bishop.

27 \( \text{Xxf}5 \)!!
Johansen opts for the latter, after seeing that 27 \( \text{Ag}2 \) \( \text{Ac}8 \) or 27...\( \text{Ad}8 \) leads to the loss of the a5-pawn. Even so, this was probably a lesser evil than the text.

27...\( \text{Xxf}5 \) 28 \( \text{Exe}8+ \) \( \text{Xxe}8 \) 29 \( \text{b}4 \)
White tries a desperate move in a very difficult position. If instead 29 \( \text{b}3 \), preparing the advance c2-c4 to reinforce the d5-pawn, then 29...\( \text{Wb}5 \) 30 \( \text{Ae}1 \) c4! 31 \( \text{bc}4 \) \( \text{Xc}4 \) 32 \( \text{Wc}3 \) \( \text{Xc}3 \) 33 \( \text{Xc}3 \) \( \text{Ee}4 \) and Black finally conquers one of the weak pawns.

29...\( \text{Wf}4 \)!
Seizing the light squares on the whole board. By now the absence of the fianchettoed bishop is very notable.

30 bxc5 \textit{Wxd5} 31 \textit{Wb4} \textit{Ah3}!

Before launching a battery along the h1-a8 diagonal, Andersson sensibly displaces the enemy knight.

32 \textit{Qe1} \textit{Ad7} 33 \textit{Oc3}

Or 33 \textit{Wd4} \textit{Wxd4} 34 \textit{Oxd4} dxc5 35 \textit{Qxc5} \textit{Ax5} with an easy win.

33...\textit{C6} 34 \textit{Af1} dxc5!

White has a serious problem with his doubled c-pawns which lack natural protection. In the following play Karpov directs all his attention to them.

11...\textit{Cc8}!

11...\textit{Cc6}?! 12 \textit{Qxc6} \textit{axc6} is less promising, since the bishop will obstruct the rooks along the c-file; besides, its most powerful destiny is a6.

12 \textit{f3} \textit{Cc6} 13 \textit{Wb3}

Now if 13 \textit{Qxc6}, then 13...\textit{Cc6}!, preparing ...\textit{ac8} and ...\textit{a6} with strong pressure on c4.

13...\textit{Wd5}!

The queen vacates the a5-square for the knight, a threat that forces White’s reply.

14 \textit{Qxc6} \textit{Cc6} 15 \textit{Qd2} \textit{Cc7}!

Preparing ...\textit{b7-a6}. The immediate 15...\textit{a6}?! permits the annoying 16 \textit{Wa4}, while after 15...\textit{ac8} 16 \textit{Wa3}! a5 17 \textit{ab1} \textit{a6} 18 e4, followed by \textit{xe3}, White achieves a counterattack on the b6-pawn.

16 \textit{Wa4} a5

Renewing the ...\textit{a6} idea. Thanks to the precise 15...\textit{Cc7}, the queen now protects b6.

\textbf{Example 202}

\textbf{J.Rukavina-A.Karpov}

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
17 \[f1 \ a6 18 \[b2

Rukavina finally gives up the c4-pawn, aware that 18 \[b3 \[b8 doesn’t change anything.

18...\[xc4 19 \[xc4 \[xc4

Black is a sound pawn up, besides which his pieces are more active.

20 \[b5 \[c6 21 e4 d6 22 \[g5 \[d7!

Heading for c4. It is a well-known fact that a square occupied by a weak pawn remains a weakness even after the disappearance of that pawn.

23 \[e7 \[e5 24 \[xc7 \[xc7 25 \[b5


25...\[c4 26 \[c1 \[ac8

Black later realized his huge advantage.

Example 203
I.Hakki-M.Chokshi
Dubai 2004

In the previous example the white c-pawns weren’t just doubled, they were also isolated which made them very vulnerable. Here, in contrast, Black’s c-pawns aren’t isolated, but the location of his d-pawn at d5 implies that they are chronically weak anyway. In the following play, White sus-

pends any attempt to exploit his lead in development (e.g. 11 f5!!?) and focuses completely on the black c-pawns.

11 b3!

Preparing \[a3 and reinforcing the a4-square for the knight.

11...\[h6 12 \[a4 \[f5

13 \[d2!

Since 13 \[e3? At once runs into 13...\[e3, White prepares it. Besides, his queen gets ready to join the attack on the c5-pawn from f2 or a5.

13...\[c7?

For better or worse Black had to try 13...c4!, giving up a pawn in order to release White’s dark square bind, with a distant hope of ...c6-c5 and ...\[b7 in the future.
14 \textit{a}3 \textit{w}a7 15 c4!

A key move that rules out ...c5-c4 for the rest of the game. Now there appears the threat of 16 \textit{w}a5, conquering the c5-pawn.

15...a5 16 \textit{w}f2 d4 17 \textit{g}g5!

Hakki's play is very logical. After provoking ...d5-d4 he aims at installing a knight on e4, which would mean the end for the c5-pawn.

17...\textit{e}e3 18 \textit{h}fe1 f5 19 \textit{xe}3!

An appealing solution which will leave White in complete command of the dark squares. 19 \textit{c}c1? also made sense, whereas after 19 exf6?! gxf6 20 \textit{e}e4 f5, followed by ...\textit{g}g8, Black would obtain some minimal play along the g-file.

19...\textit{d}xe3 20 \textit{w}xe3 \textit{e}e7 21 \textit{e}e1

The immediate 21 \textit{x}xc5 was more forcing, but there is no reason to hurry.

21...0-0 22 \textit{x}xc5 \textit{x}xc5 23 \textit{x}xc5

A brief glance at the position reveals that White is strategically winning. His knights are monstrous, whereas the entire black army has been deprived of any prospects.

23...\textit{d}d8 24 \textit{h}h2 \textit{w}e7 25 a3 g6 26 d4 \textit{b}b8 27 \textit{c}c3

In the further course of the game, Hakki applied more or less the following plan: a prophylactic king march to a2, a rook transfer to g1, and finally g2-g4 with a decisive attack on the black king.

Now let's see some cases of more healthy doubled pawns, and their usage in the positional battle.

\textbf{Example 204}

\textbf{V.Sokolov-N.Karaklajic}

Yugoslav Championship, Sarajevo 1958

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
\includegraphics{chess_diagram.png}
\end{figure}
\end{center}

In this typical position from the Open Spanish, White's main plan is to take control of the dark squares, in particular d4 and c5. Black, on the other hand, aims at a liberating ...c7-c5 advance.

17 \textit{b}b3

Heading for d4 and unblocking the rook on d1. The attempt to enhance this idea by 17 b4?! \textit{d}d7 18 \textit{b}b3 permits 18...c5! 19 bxc5 \textit{x}xc5 and Black has no major problems; e.g. 20 \textit{bd}4 \textit{h}h4? followed by ...\textit{ac}8, or 20 \textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}5 21 \textit{xd}5 \textit{a}a4 22 \textit{we}3 \textit{ac}8 23 \textit{ac}1 \textit{w}a3 with clear compensation for the pawn. The drawback of b2-b4 is evident: the pawn on c3 turns into a weakness.

17...\textit{x}xb3

Other moves like 17...\textit{ad}8 and 17...c6
are strongly met by 18  \( \text{d} \text{b} \text{d} \text{4} \), seizing the centre.

18  \text{a} \text{b} \text{3} !

The correct recapture, in order to clear the a-file for the rook and enable a future b3-b4 with a grip on the dark squares. In contrast, the stereotypical 18  \text{e} \text{x} \text{b} \text{3} !? permits 18...  \text{a} \text{d} \text{a} \text{d} \text{8} , when the ...c7-c5 advance proves inevitable; e.g. 19  \text{c} \text{d} \text{4}  \text{c} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4}  \text{2} \text{0}  \text{c} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4}  \text{c} \text{5} ! 21  \text{d} \text{x} \text{c} \text{5}  \text{c} \text{x} \text{c} \text{5} 22  \text{a} \text{c} \text{a} \text{c} \text{1}  \text{c} \text{b} \text{6} , followed by 23...d4, with complete equality.

18...c6 ?!

Overprotecting the d5-pawn, but this leads Black into a rather passive position. The active 18...c5! was called for; e.g. 19  \text{f} \text{x} \text{f} \text{5}  \text{f} \text{x} \text{f} \text{5} 20  \text{c} \text{x} \text{d} \text{5}  \text{c} \text{e} \text{6} 21  \text{d} \text{d} \text{6}  \text{f} \text{x} \text{b} \text{3} 22  \text{a} \text{d} \text{x} \text{a} \text{6}  \text{a} \text{x} \text{a} \text{6} 23  \text{a} \text{x} \text{a} \text{6}  \text{f} \text{d} \text{5} with some compensation for the pawn.

19 b4!

A strong advance that fixes a whole complex of weaknesses on c5, a5, c6 and a6. Thanks to the b-pawns being doubled, if Black plays ...c6-c5 at any moment, White can capture on c5 without ending up with a weak pawn on c3, which was his problem in the 17 b4 subline above.

19...g6 20  \text{e} \text{e} \text{1} !

Some useful prophylaxis. Sokolov plans  \text{f} \text{x} \text{f} \text{5} followed by  \text{d} \text{d} \text{4} with a “good knight vs. bad bishop” scenario, but first he gives the e5-pawn some extra support. 20  \text{f} \text{x} \text{f} \text{5} !  \text{f} \text{x} \text{f} \text{5} is less convincing; e.g. 21  \text{b} \text{e} \text{1}  \text{g} \text{4} ! or 21  \text{c} \text{d} \text{4}  \text{c} \text{x} \text{e} \text{5} 22  \text{c} \text{x} \text{e} \text{5} 23  \text{c} \text{x} \text{c} \text{6}  \text{e} \text{e} \text{2} with counterplay.

20...g7

Karaklajic saves the better of his minor pieces, aware that after 20...\text{c}7 !? 21  \text{f} \text{x} \text{f} \text{5}  \text{f} \text{x} \text{f} \text{5} 22  \text{c} \text{d} \text{4} White would be clearly better. One future plan is f2-f4, g2-g4 and f4-f5, advancing the kingside majority; another is  \text{b} \text{3} \text{c} \text{5} , attacking the a6-pawn.

21  \text{e} \text{e} \text{3} !

From e3 the queen doesn’t just complicate the ...c6-c5 advance, she also eyes the h6-square. The immediate 21  \text{c} \text{d} \text{4} permits 21...c5 22  \text{b} \text{x} \text{c} \text{5}  \text{c} \text{x} \text{c} \text{5} and Black frees his game to some extent.

21...f4

Asking the question of the knight. The attempt to prepare ...c6-c5 by 21...\text{e}c8 fails to 22  \text{h} \text{h} \text{6} with a decisive 23  \text{g} \text{5} next.

22  \text{c} \text{d} \text{4} \text{c} \text{5} 23  \text{b} \text{x} \text{c} \text{5}

Avoiding 23  \text{c} \text{6} !?  \text{d} \text{d} \text{7} ! 24  \text{c} \text{x} \text{c} \text{5}  \text{e} \text{c} \text{8} 25  \text{a} \text{x} \text{a} \text{6}  \text{e} \text{e} \text{6} and the knight is trapped.

23  \text{c} \text{x} \text{c} \text{5}

At first sight Black isn’t doing so badly; however, Sokolov has a tactical twist.

24  \text{g} \text{f} \text{5} !  \text{c} \text{x} \text{e} \text{3}

The only move, in view of the impending fork on h6.
25 \( \text{Qxe3} \) \( \text{Ae6} \) 26 \( \text{Aed1} \)

The virtue of White's little combination is evident: the d5-pawn has become exposed.

26...\( \text{Aed8} \) 27 \( \text{Aad4!} \)

Before attacking the weakness on d5, it should be blocked. In contrast, 27 \( \text{Ab3?} \) permits 27...d4! and Black solves all his problems.

27...a5 28 \( \text{Aad1} \)

Now the d5-pawn is doomed, whereas White also has a good plan in f2-f4, g2-g4 and f4-f5, advancing his kingside majority. The game continued 28...\( \text{Af8} \) 29 f4 a4 30 g4 a3 31 f5 \( \text{Ac8} \) 32 bxa3 \( \text{Axa3} \) 33 \( \text{Axd5} \) \( \text{Axd5} \) 34 \( \text{Axd5} \) \( \text{Ae8} \) 35 \( \text{Ac5} \) and White later realized his extra pawn.

When about to double our pawns, we usually capture towards the centre, like Sokolov's a2xb3 in the previous example. However, as we will see next, this is not always the best solution.

In this French position Black has just played 9...\( \text{Wc7} \), attacking the e5-pawn. How should White react?

10 \( \text{Axg6?} \)

When making this move Sveshnikov perhaps overlooked, or underestimated Black's reply. Correct was 10 \( \text{We2} \) with a balanced position that has been reached several times in practice.

10...\( \text{fxg6!} \)

Violating the principle of capturing towards the centre, but with good reason: the f-file is opened for the black pieces, the king will feel very safe on g8, and the ...g6-g5 advance will be an asset in the future. In contrast, the stereotypical 10...hxg6?! can be met by 11 \( \text{Ag5} \), preventing 0-0-0 and preparing \( \text{Bbd2-b3-d4} \) with a certain dark square dominance.

11 \( \text{Af4} \)

White brings his bishop to g3 where it will reinforce the kingside and the e5-pawn, but also leaves the g1-a7 diagonal in the opponent's hands. More natural seems 11 \( \text{Le3} \), challenging the enemy bishop, when Black could consider 11...\( \text{Le7} \) 12 \( \text{Bbd2} \) 0-0 13 \( \text{Ad4} \) g5!, preparing ...g5-g4 as well as ...\( \text{Ae8-g6} \). Just like 19 b4 in the previous example, an advance with the front doubled pawn proves to be an excellent idea. In contrast, with one of the g-pawns still on f7, then 13...g5?! would be much less tempting due to the exposure of the king.

11...0-0 12 \( \text{Gg3} \) \( \text{Le7} \! \)

After White's overprotection of the e5-pawn the knight is rather idle on c6, so Balashov redirects it to f5.

13 \( \text{Bbd2} \) \( \text{Af5} \) 14 \( \text{Bb3} \) \( \text{Aa4!} \)

Preventing a potential blockade on d4. In contrast, after 14...\( \text{Ab6} \) 15 \( \text{Wd2} \), intending \( \text{Fd4} \), f2-f3 and \( \text{Ff2} \), White has more hopes of a successful defence.

15 \( \text{Ah1?} \)

Example 205
E.Sveshnikov-Y.Balashov
USSR Championship, Moscow 1976
Sveshnikov unpins his f-pawn in order to enable a future fxg3, but now he gets a problem on the opposite flank. After 15 \( \text{Wd2!} \) \( \text{AXB3} \) 16 axb3 a5, followed by ...\( \text{Wb6} \) and perhaps ...d5-d4, Black’s advantage is beyond any doubt, but White is suffering less than in the game.

15...\( \text{Wb6!} \)

This leaves the white queen awkwardly tied to the pin along the d1-a4 diagonal.

16 \( \text{WC2} \) \( \text{Ac8} \) 17 \( \text{Be2} \)

17...\( \text{h6!} \)

Finally Balashov exploits the ...g6-g5 resource to step up the kingside pressure. Here and later, 17...d4!? was interesting as well.

18 \( \text{H3 g5} \) 19 \( \text{He2} \) \( \text{Cc7!} \)

Aware that the opponent can’t undertake much, Black takes his time and enables a doubling of rooks at some useful moment.

20 \( \text{Ce1?!} \)

Sveshnikov desires to liberate himself by \( \text{Ce1-d3} \), but now his position turns unstable, something that Balashov immediately exploits. A waiting move like 20 \( \text{Dd2} \) was preferable, although White’s task remains very difficult.

20...\( \text{Ce7!} \)

With the threat of 21...\( \text{Dd4} \).

21 \( \text{Dd1} \) \( \text{Cc4!} \)

Preparing ...\( g5-g4 \). As we will see next, White is already incapable of defending his kingside.

22 \( \text{Dd2 g4!} \) 23 \( \text{hxg4} \) \( \text{Ge3!} \) 24 \( \text{We2} \)

Or 24 \( \text{fxe3} \) \( \text{Ef1+} \) 25 \( \text{Gg1} \) \( \text{We3} \) 26 \( \text{Df3} \) \( \text{xd1} \) 27 \( \text{Axld1} \) \( \text{Wf4} \) with a decisive advantage.

24...\( \text{Dxg4} \) 25 \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{Dxh2} \) 26 \( \text{Dd4} \)

If 26 \( \text{Dxh2} \), then 26...\( \text{h4+} \) 27 \( \text{Gg3} \) \( \text{Gg1!} \) and wins – Suetin.

26...\( \text{Gc5} \)

Even stronger was 26...\( \text{xb5!} \), intending 27 \( \text{Dxb5} \) \( \text{h4} \), but the text doesn’t ruin anything.

27 \( \text{Gxh2} \) \( \text{Dd4} \) 28 \( \text{Cxd4} \) \( \text{Dxd4} \) 29 \( \text{Cc3?} \)

29 \( \text{Wf2} \) \( \text{Dxd2} \) 30 \( \text{Wxd2} \) was relatively better, although the extra pawn decides in the long run.

29...\( \text{h4+} \) 30 \( \text{Gg3} \) \( \text{xb5} \) 31 \( \text{Wf2} \) \( \text{Wd8} \) 32 \( \text{We3} \)

32...\( \text{d4!} \)

Deflecting the white queen in order to give check on g5.

33 \( \text{Dcd1} \) \( \text{Dhf4} \) 34 \( \text{Wxf4} \) \( \text{Dxf4} \) 35 \( \text{Dxf4} \) \( \text{Wg5+} \)

In view of the imminent mate, White resigned.

Another reasonable idea when possessing doubled pawns is simply to get rid of them. Here is one example.
Example 206
W.Hug-S.Gligoric
Skopje Olympiad 1972

13...b6 14 dxc4!
This capture just helps the black bishop reach the long diagonal. 14 d4 was preferable, when 14...d5 15 b3 cxd3 16 cxd3 c5, preparing ...c6 and ...d5, seems slightly better for Black. At this moment 17 g3? fails to 17...bxd3! 18 c6+ a6 19 exf6 g6 etc.
14...cxd4 15 c2 c5 16 b3 d5 17 c4
Or 17 e2 d7 with a clear advantage - Gligoric. Next Black can consider ...b7 as well as ...a6 followed by ...d5.
17...dxe3 18 xc3

18...c4!
A strong advance that improves the prospects of virtually all the black pieces. White now faces an uphill struggle due to his lack of light square control, and the contrast with the initial diagram is striking.
19 d2 c7 20 d1 c8 21 d4 d8 21 d4 c8
The last piece enters the game. Being short of constructive plans, Hug now tries a sacrifice.
22 c6+! a6
After 22...gxf6? 23 exf6 c8 24 e5 the position is rather murky despite Black’s extra piece. From a practical perspective, avoiding complications in a superior position makes a lot of sense.
23 exf6 xf4 24 e5 xf6 25 bxc4?
Helping the knight to a better square. Preferable was 25 fxg7 cxb3 26 Axc8 Axc8 27 axb3 Axb3 28 Ad4, preparing Ce5, with an inferior but not yet lost position.

25..Cx4 26 Dc2 gxf6!

Gligoric has calculated that the ensuing white attack is harmless.

27 Wg3+

Or 27 Cc7!? Wc3+! 28 Wxe3 Cxe3, keeping the material advantage.

27..Ch8 28 Cg5 Cf8 29 Ca1

In the event of 29 Wf4 Black of course avoids 29...fxe5?? 30 Cxf7+, preferring the simple 29...Wg7.

29...e5

The attack has been neutralized and Black is winning.

30 Dd3 Wxg5 31 Wxd5 Ce3!

Confident about the team of queen and knight in the attack, Gligoric changes the material balance.

32 Axc8 Dxd5 33 Dxf8+ Wg7 34 Dc8

If 34 Bcc8, then 34...We3+ or 34...Dd2 decides.

34..Df4 35 Hc2

The only way of parrying both threats at g2 and e2.

35..Dh3 36 Cf1 Wf5+ 37 Dc1 We4 38 Dd1 Df2+ 39 Dd2 Dd3+ 40 We1 De4

With the inevitable threat of 41...We3+
followed by a knight check on d2 or f2. White resigned.

Example 207

J.Ehlvest-G.Rechlis

Manila Interzonal 1990

Sometimes doubled pawns prove useful for controlling specific squares, in particular central ones. In the position above, White’s isolated doubled pawns on the c-file aren’t really exposed at this moment, and rather help him to control the centre. With his next move Ehlvest immediately exploits this fact.

22 Ca1!

With the strong plan of Cc2-e3-d5.

22..Dg7

Unfortunately for Black, a similar manoeuvre with 22..Db8 followed by ...Cc6-d4 isn’t possible due to the pawn on c3. Thus in the game he prepares ...f6-f5 with some kingside activity.

23 Cc2 f5 24 Ce3

Also possible was 24 exf5 Cxf5 25 Cf2 with some advantage thanks to the bishop pair, but the text is more clear-cut, in order to install the knight on d5 as soon as possible.
24...f4
After 24...fxe4 25 fxe4 hxg4? 26 hxg4! White wins material; e.g. 26...f5 27 hxe4
or 26...h8 27 f6.
25 d5!
In just four moves the knight has been dramatically improved, exploiting the dy-
namic potential of the doubled pawns. Whenever Black captures on d5, then by
c4xd5 White manages to repair his pawn structure, an idea familiar to us from Van
Wely-Salov.
25...h5 26 a4!
Initiating a minority attack.
26...b8 27 a5 bxa5
The natural 27...d7? fails to 28 c7.

With double threats at d6 and c5.
38...f7?
A tactical slip in time trouble. 38...e6
was necessary with an inferior, though not
yet lost game.
39 xc5
Now the black position collapses.
39...e7 40 xd6 w8 41 c5
Preparing 42 c4. Black resigned.

Example 208
F. Braga-U. Andersson
Sao Paulo 1979

Here is a more complex example on the
same topic. As so often in the Open Sicilian
Black is under some pressure on the king-
side, but in the long run the pawn structure
speaks for his advantage.
18 \texttt{\text{xf6!?}}

In relation to my previous comment, exchanging pieces shouldn’t favour White, but Braga is following a predefined plan. Preferable was 18 \texttt{\text{ad1}} or 18 \texttt{\text{Wh4}}, keeping all the doors open.

18...\texttt{\text{xf6}} 19 \texttt{\text{g4}}

Now White’s intentions are easily appreciated: swap the last defender of the d5-square and then install the knight there. We saw a similar idea in Hracek-Almasi (p. 51).

19...\texttt{\text{ad8!}}

Andersson calmly proceeds with the most natural move in the position.

20 \texttt{\text{Fd1}}

After 20 \texttt{\text{xe6 fxe6! 21 We3 Ad4! 22}}

\texttt{\text{ad1 wb6 23 b3 Ac8}} Black exerted strong pressure in the game S.Baumegger-D.Zoler, Graz 2002. The c2-pawn is a headache for White, and the attempt to improve this line by 22 \texttt{\text{De2?}} fails to 22...\texttt{\text{b4}}, winning a pawn.

20...\texttt{\text{ WC4!}}

The queen unpins the e5-pawn to enable ...\texttt{\text{d4}}, and also eyes the interesting b4-square.

21 \texttt{\text{xe6 fxe6!}}

By now the ...\texttt{\text{f7xe6}} recapture doesn’t cause us any surprise, yet its impact on the battle is enormous. Having been deprived of the d5-square, White ends up lacking a constructive plan, whereas Black has quite an easy play on the fragile enemy queenside. Due to the passive location of his knight, White can’t really exploit the weak e5 and e6 pawns.

22 \texttt{\text{Dd3}}

22 \texttt{\text{xd8}} was preferable – Andersson, although after 22...\texttt{\text{xd8 23 We3 wb4 24Db1 h6!}}, preparing 25...\texttt{\text{g5}} and ...\texttt{\text{D(d2,}}} White’s queenside is under obvious pressure.

22...\texttt{\text{wb4 23 Db1}}

If 23 \texttt{\text{b3?!}, then 23...\texttt{\text{xd3 24 Dxd3 Ad8!}} followed by 25...\texttt{\text{c8}}, winning a pawn.

23...\texttt{\text{Dd4!}}
Just like in the previous example the side with the doubled pawns uses them as a support for his pieces. Evidently it won't be easy for White to dislodge this rook, since the knight has to keep an eye on both e4 and a4.

24 h3 d6 25 g4

After providing his king with a flight square Braga commences the search for counterplay.

25 ...xd3 26 cxd3 wb6!

Of course not 26 ...xd3? 27 xe6 and White wakes up, now that 27 ...xc3?? runs into 28 we8+. In contrast, the text forces him to a dull defence of the backward pawn on d3.

27 we2 wd4 28 d1 h6 29 wg4 wb6 30 we2

The multiple weaknesses at d3, b2 and a4 make it difficult for White to undertake any active measures. Thus Black has time to improve his position step by step.

30 ...wd6 31 wh5 wh7 32 f1 we7 33 we2

Or 33 f3 d6! – Andersson, with both 34 ...b6 and 34 ...wd7 coming up next.

33 ...d4 34 d1 wd8

By placing the rook at the front, Black enables a future ...b4.

35 wg4 wb6 36 we2 db4 37 db1

After 37 db2 gh5 38 cc2 fh4! White is in zugzwang; e.g. 39 wf2 xf2 40 xf2

...c1, winning a decisive pawn.

37 ...g5 38 wc2 we3!

Suddenly Black changes his focus to the opposite flank.

39 ef1 df4 40 e2

The threat of 40 ...wg3 had to be parried, but now a pawn falls on the other flank.

40 ...wd2! 41 wxd2 xd2 db2 42 db1 xa4

With an extra pawn and clearly more active pieces, Black is winning.

43 gh1 db4 44 df1 a5 45 b3 gh6 46 fh2 gh5

Avoiding 46 ...a4?! 47 db1! with some confusion, but now 47 ...a4 is a threat.

47 ef3 db6!

In view of the coming invasion with ...c6-c2, White resigned.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 356.

**Blockade**

A powerful strategical weapon is the blockade. By placing one of our pieces in front of an enemy pawn, we don’t just prevent the advance of that pawn, we also limit the movements of its fellow pieces. These observations go back to Nimzowitsch, who also noticed that the blocking piece itself tends to be rather well placed, at least in
the case of a central or bishop’s pawn.

So far in this book we have seen numerous blockades; e.g. in Mikhailchuk-Ehlvest (p. 57), Kharlov-Villavicius (p. 98), Spassky-Karpov (p. 162), and Ivanisevic-Solak (p. 237), just to name a few. In the following we will see some more examples on how to create a blockade and take advantage of it afterwards.

**Example 209**

**P. Van der Sterren - L. Ljubojevic**

Amsterdam 1999

Ljubojevic creates a passed pawn but also lets his opponent install a powerful blockade, one that will drastically change the strategical balance. Preferable was either 20...cxb4 21 Wxb4 a6! 22 Qd4 Wb6 with just a slight disadvantage – Donev, or the sharper 20...d4!? 21 exd4 cxd4 22 Qe1 Wg4 with complex play.

21 Qd4! Wg6 22 Qxe4 Wxe4 23 b5

The tremendous knight on d4 doesn’t just prevent ...d5-d4, it also severely restricts the bishop on b7. Meanwhile, the passed pawn on c4 is unlikely to advance, whereas White may soon create one of his own on the b-file.

23...Wg6

Preparing ...a7-a6 in order to activate the rook on a8. The immediate 23...a6? failed to 24 b6.

24 Wf7!

The queen unblocks the a-pawn with tempo.

24...Wb6 25 a4 Qe8

Parrying the threat of 26 a5.

26 Wb4! a5

This lets White add a protected passed pawn to his other advantages, but there was no other way to prevent a4-a5.

27 Wc3 Qad8 28 Qd2!

One of the merits of hanging pawns is that they control a wide range of squares. For this reason the white knight is currently short of prospects. With his next move Van der Sterren addresses this issue.

20 b4!

A typical counter-strike in this structure, which weakens the hanging pawns and gains some dark square control. In fact, we already came across it in Aagaard-Akesson (p. 201) and Hansen-Tiviakov (p. 217). In contrast, after 20 Qxe4?! dxe4 21 Qd2 Qd3! Black obtains counterplay, now that 22 Wxc5? fails to 22...Qc8.

20...c4?

Now that the situation on the queenside
has stabilized, White has time for a major regrouping of his pieces. The rooks will be doubled on the d-file and the knight switches to f4 or c3 in order to exert maximum pressure on the d5-pawn. Meanwhile, Black can’t do very much.

28...\text{\textit{W}}d6 29 \textit{Q}e2 \textit{W}e4 30 \textit{Q}fd1 \textit{W}d8 31 \textit{Q}d4!

In the absence of Black’s other minor pieces, the rook can take up the blocking task.

31...\textit{Q}e5

Or 31...\textit{Q}xd4 32 \textit{W}xd4, preparing \textit{Q}e2-c3 and e3-e4.

32 \textit{W}d2 \textit{W}c7

The immediate 32...\textit{Q}g6 is well met by the prophylactic 33 g3, just like in the game.

33 \textit{Q}c3

Finally White is ready for the tactical shot 34 e4. We saw a similar idea in Kharlov-Villavicencio (p. 98).

34 g3 \textit{W}c5

Ljubojevic gives up the pawn, aware that 34...\textit{Q}d6 35 e4! leads to the same thing.

35 \textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Q}xd5 36 \textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Q}xd5 37 \textit{W}xd5 \textit{W}b4

After 37...\textit{W}xd5 38 \textit{Q}xd5 the rook ending is easily won due to the badly placed rook on g6.

38 \textit{Q}c1 \textit{W}xa4

Or 38...c3 39 \textit{W}d8+! \textit{Q}h7 40 \textit{W}d3 \textit{W}xa4 41 \textit{Q}xc3, intending h4-h5.

39 \textit{Q}xc4 \textit{Q}a1+ 40 \textit{Q}g2 \textit{Q}b1 41 \textit{Q}c8+ \textit{Q}h7 42 \textit{W}xf7

With such an exposed black king, the rest is easy.

42...\textit{Q}f6 43 \textit{W}g8+ \textit{Q}g6 44 \textit{W}c4! \textit{W}f5 45 f4 a4 46 e4 \textit{W}g4 47 e5 \textit{Q}e6 48 h3

Black resigned in view of 48...\textit{W}f5 49 g4.

\textbf{Example 210}

\textbf{A.Kovchan-V.Malaniuk}

\textbf{Swidnica 1999}

33...\textit{Q}g6?

This attacking try leads nowhere after Van der Sterren’s simple reply, so 33...f5, complicating e3-e4, was a better choice. White can now win a pawn by 34 f4 \textit{Q}e8 35 \textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Q}xd5 36 \textit{Q}xd5, but after 36...c3 Black obtains some counterplay. Thus the prophylactic 34 h3!?, preparing f2-f4, might be more accurate.

In structural terms White is better thanks to his strong passed pawn on e5 and Black’s oppressed pawn majority on the queenside. Malaniuk comes up with a clever knight manoeuvre.

17...\textit{W}e8!

Preparing...\textit{Q}d8-e6 with a confident
blockade of the e5-pawn.

18 d2 d8 19 g2

By overprotecting the knight on f3, White aims at unpinning it with wc2.

19...g6!

The immediate 19...e6?! permits 20 wc2 attacking h7, so Black responds to this threat in advance.

20 wc2 xd3 21 wxd3 e6

The plan has been accomplished. From e6 the knight doesn't just prevent the advance of the e-pawn, it also controls a great range of squares.

22 h4?

Preparing 23 g5 in order to swap the "bad" bishop.

22...wh5

Seeing that the restrictive 22...h6 23 h1 wh5?! runs into 24 g5!, Black accepts the enemy idea and keeps improving his pieces.

23 g5 hae8

After 23...xg5?! 24 xg5 xg5 25 hxg5 wxg5 26 c5 White has a strong initiative for the pawn. In the game he will achieve the same idea in a less favourable version.

24 xe7 xe7

25 g5!?

A typical method in the fight against the blockade: swap the blocking piece. Actually we came across it in several earlier exam-

pies, such as Krivoshey-Timoshenko with 34 g4 (p. 38) and Hellsten-Veloz with 23 b5 (p. 122).

25...xg5 26 hxg5 wxg5 27 c5

In exchange for the pawn White enjoys an excellent knight on c5 and, again, a dangerous passed pawn on the e-file. His only problem is his king.

27...g4!

Parrying the fork on e6 and preparing hostile actions against the white king. Less convincing is 27 f5 28 f4, followed by a5, or 27 g6 28 xf8+ xf8 29 f1 - Malaniuk.

28 h1 g6 29 a5f h6

Here 29...f4!, hitting the d4-pawn, seems very strong; e.g. 30 xc7+ g8!, when Black's attack is the stronger one. Perhaps White should have preferred 28 wd1 two moves earlier.

30 e3 b6 31 a6?

By 31 axb6 cxb6 32 a6, followed by b4, White could have held the balance; e.g. 32 c8 33 b4! xf1 34 xf1 c4 35 xd5 xd4 36 f4 with drawish simplifications.

31...c5!

Destroying the centre. This strong blow is the reason why White should have swapped on b6 before taking the a6-pawn.
long-term plan is the e4-e5 advance. However, the straightforward 17 f4?! permits 17...\texttt{W}b6! 18 h1 c4, preparing ...\texttt{A}g4, with counterplay on the dark squares. With his next move Bareev tries first to stabilize the situation on the queenside before taking concrete action in the centre.

\texttt{17 a4!}

Softening up the c4-square for the knight, an idea familiar to us from Najdorf-Fischer (p. 144).

\texttt{17...b4?!}

Preferable was 17...a6, keeping the tension, although after 18 axb5 axb5 19 \texttt{A}xa8 \texttt{W}xa8 20 \texttt{A}a1 \texttt{W}b8 21 f4 White has the initiative – Krasenkow.

\texttt{18 \texttt{W}c2 g6}

In this Benoni-like structure, White’s

\texttt{Example 211}

\texttt{E.Bareev-J.Polgar}

Candidates Tournament, Elista 2007

\texttt{19 a5!}

A clever provocative measure. Before installing the knight on c4 White aims to deprive the black bishop of the a6-square. His idea succeeds after 19...a6?! 20 \texttt{C}c4 or if a5-a6 is allowed, so Polgar’s reply is logical.

\texttt{19...a6 20 \texttt{A}f1!}

Another key move. The knight tends to be the best blocker, so Bareev protects it from exchanges by swapping the light-squared bishops. Less precise was 20 \texttt{C}c4?! \texttt{A}xc4 21 \texttt{W}xc4 \texttt{A}g7 and Black defends, with ...\texttt{C}c8-c7-e7 as a future idea.
20...\textit{\texttt{xf1} 21 \texttt{xf1} \texttt{h6}}

This practically loses a tempo, but after 21...\texttt{g7} 22 \texttt{fe1} \texttt{d7} 23 \texttt{xg7} \texttt{xg7} 24 \texttt{f4} preparing \texttt{c4} White is also better – Krasenkov. Evidently the f2-f4 advance doesn’t just gain space and support a future e4-e5, it also protects the knight from exchanges, i.e. 24 \texttt{c4}?! \texttt{e5}.

22 \texttt{f4} \texttt{g7} 23 \texttt{fe1} \texttt{wd7} 24 \texttt{c4} \texttt{h5} 25 \texttt{ad1}

White’s pieces are in perfect harmony and the desired e4-e5 advance isn’t far away. As for Black, the terrific knight on c4 has left her without the customary queenside play that one expects in the Benoni.

25...\texttt{xb2} 26 \texttt{xb2} \texttt{g7} 27 \texttt{wg2}

A technical choice: before launching the e4-e5 advance White prepares g3-g4 in order to restrict the enemy knight. 27 \texttt{e5} \texttt{f5} is less clear – Bareev.

27...\texttt{ad8} 28 \texttt{g4} \texttt{f6} 29 \texttt{h3} \texttt{g5}

This merely weakens the king, but Black was short of reasonable moves.

30 \texttt{fxg5} \texttt{fxg5} 31 \texttt{e5}!

Finally! Now the d5-pawn turns into a strong passed pawn.

31...\texttt{dxe5} 32 \texttt{d6} \texttt{wf7} 33 \texttt{wd5}!

Less technical was 33 \texttt{exe5}?! \texttt{xb3}, intending 34...\texttt{xe5}, but now the threat of 34 \texttt{exe5} is for real.

33...\texttt{e4} 34 \texttt{wxg5}!

Again 34 \texttt{e5}?! \texttt{xe5} 35 \texttt{xe5} \texttt{xb3} leads to unnecessary black counterplay.

34...\texttt{wf3} 35 \texttt{wd5}+?!

More precise was 35 \texttt{we3} with a clear advantage – Bareev.

35...\texttt{e6} 36 \texttt{e3} \texttt{xd6}! 37 \texttt{xf3} \texttt{xd5} 38 \texttt{xd5} \texttt{xf3} 39 \texttt{ff2}

By some clever tactics Polgar has escaped to an endgame without the d-pawn on the board, but even so White keeps a clear advantage thanks to his active pieces and Black’s weak queenside pawns. The game continued 39...\texttt{e2}+ 40 \texttt{xf3} \texttt{c2} 41 \texttt{d8}+! \texttt{f7} 42 \texttt{d7}+ \texttt{g6} 43 \texttt{xa7} \texttt{e6} 44 \texttt{e4} \texttt{d4} 45 \texttt{h4}! and White soon converted his extra pawn.

\textit{Example 212}

M.Euwe-H.Pilnik

Amsterdam 1950

Here is an older example that shows the usage of several blocking squares. White has emerged from the opening with a passed pawn on d5, and Black hurries to set up a blockade with a knight.

12...\texttt{c4}! 13 \texttt{b3}

A rather indifferent reply. By 13 \texttt{b5}! White could have fought against the enemy
plan, and also provided his second knight with a good square on c3.

13...\(\text{Qd6}\) 14 \(\text{Qe3}\) b6 15 \(\text{Wd2}\) \(\text{Qe8}\)!

A “mysterious” rook move, aimed at the potential f2-f4.

16 \(\text{f4}\)

16 \(\text{f3}\) was a more restrained approach, preparing \(\text{Qf2}\), \(\text{Qf1}\) and a4-a5 with queenside play – Ftacnik.

16...\(\text{Qc7}\)

Pilnik brings his knight closer to the heat of the battle and enables a future \(\text{Qa6}\).

17 \(\text{Qf2}\)?

An oversight that lets Black win the fight for the centre with his next, precise move.

17 \(\text{Qae1}\) was correct, when 17...\(\text{Qd7}\), preparing \(\text{Qcb5}\), leads to a balanced game. Both 17...\(\text{Qa6}\) 18 \(\text{f5!}\) and 17...\(\text{Qg4}\) 18 \(\text{f5!}\) gxf5 19 \(\text{h3}\), on the other hand, yield White some initiative.

17...\(\text{Qxf4!}\) 18 \(\text{Qxf4}\)

Since 18 gxf4? fails to 18...\(\text{Qxe4!}\) 19 \(\text{Qxe4}\) \(\text{Qxe4}\) 20 \(\text{Qxe4}\) \(\text{Qxa1}\), Euwe has to give up the e5-square.

18...\(\text{Qa6}\) 19 \(\text{Qe1}\) \(\text{Qe7}\) 20 \(\text{g4?!}\)

This leads to new dark square weaknesses, and the square vacated on g3 won’t be of much use to the knight. While 20 \(\text{Qc1}\)? failed to 20...\(\text{Qxc3!}\) 21 \(\text{Wxc3}\) \(\text{Qxd5}\), a better way of solving the problem with this piece was 20 \(\text{h1}\), preparing \(\text{Qg1-f3(h3)}\).

20...\(\text{Qe5!}\)

The bishop takes up the task of blockading the other central pawn, before White is even close to achieving e4-e5.

21 \(\text{Qxe5}\) \(\text{Qxe5}\) 22 \(\text{Qg3?!}\)

It was not yet too late for 22 \(\text{Qh1}\), followed by \(\text{Qg1-f3}\), in order to improve the knight and challenge the enemy blockade. Here Black should avoid 22...\(\text{f6?!}\) 23 \(\text{Qg1}\) \(\text{Qf7}\) due to 24 \(\text{Qf3}\) \(\text{Wd6}\) 25 \(\text{e5!}\) followed by 26 \(\text{Qe4}\), with a strong initiative – Ftacnik. Preferable is 22...\(\text{Qxe2!}\) 23 \(\text{Qxe2}\) \(\text{Qe7}\), followed by ...\(\text{Qae8}\) or ...\(\text{Qf8}\), with some advantage.

22...\(\text{Qe7}\) 23 \(\text{Qf1}\) \(\text{Qc8!}\)

Keeping the “good” bishop.

24 \(\text{Qe2}\) \(\text{Qd7}\) 25 \(\text{Qef1}\) \(\text{Qf8}\)

Both here and later, 25...\(\text{b5?!}\), advancing the queenside majority, was an interesting option. Anyway the text is also fine, with the opponent being short of active plans.

26 \(\text{Wc1}\) \(\text{Qce8}\) 27 \(\text{Qh1}\) \(\text{f6!}\)

Enabling a future ...\(\text{Qf7-e5}\) to block the e4-pawn in a more confident way.

28 \(\text{Qg1}\) \(\text{Qg7}\) 29 \(\text{Qf3}\)

If 29 \(\text{h4}\) to prevent Black’s next, then after 29...\(\text{b5?!}\) 30 \(\text{Qf3}\) b4 31 \(\text{Qd1}\) \(\text{Qc8}\) 32 \(\text{Qe3}\) \(\text{Qb5}\), preparing ...\(\text{c5-c4}\), White is still under pressure.
29...Wg5!
Although the advance 29...b5 remained a good option for Black, the text has the merit of further reducing White’s counterplay.
30 Wxg5 fxg5
The doubled pawns have increased Black’s dark square control, and he is now ready to resume the plan of a knight transfer to e5.
31 Qf1 Qe8 32 Ad2 Wxf2 33 Wxf2 Qg7 34 h3 Qf6 35 Af3 Qe8!
Vacating the d7-e5 route for the knight TO RELOCATE.
36 Ad2 Qd7 37 Ad2 Qe5 38 Ad2

38...b5!
Finally Black sets his pawn majority in motion. In contrast, White’s central pawns remain completely immobilized. There followed 39 Ac2 Ac7 40 Ac1 c4 41 bxc4 bxc4 42 Ac3 Ac6 43 Ad1 Ab7 44 Ac2 a4! 45 Ac1 Ac2 46 Ac4 Ac4 47 Ac4 Ac2! 48 a3 Ab1! 49 Ab1 Ac1 50 Ac2 Ac4+ 51 Ad2 Ad5 52 Ac3 Ad3 53 Ac3 Ac4+ 54 Ad4 Ac4 and Pilnik managed to eliminate the d-pawn as well, with a winning endgame.

Now let’s see two examples on how to fight against an enemy blockade.

Example 213
M.Botvinnik-V.Smyslov
World Championship (game 13), Moscow 1957

Black has managed to install a powerful knight on e5 where it blocks White’s central pawns. Botvinnik now prepares the exchange of this piece.
25 Ad1!
With the strong plan of Qf2-d3. Black’s reply is more or less forced.
25...b5 26 Qf2 c4
If 26...Wd6, preparing ...Ac4, then 27 Af1 Ac4 28 Ac4! bxc4 29 Wxc4 with a huge advantage thanks to the strong bishop on b2 and the central passed pawns, which have now become totally mobile. Black is also in trouble after 26...bxa4 27 Ad3 Ab5 28 Ac5; for example, 28...Ad3 29 Wxd3 Wxe5 30 Ac4 or 28...Wxe5 29 Ac5 Ac2 30 Af1 with a clear edge for White in both cases, thanks to his superior pawn structure.
27 Ab5!
Opening a second front on the queenside, one that will indirectly weaken the blockade on e5.
27...xb5 28 Wd2
The queen heads for the long diagonal and prevents ...b5-b4.

28...\text{Aa}8

Installing the threat of 29...c3 followed by 30...\text{Dxf}3+, but it is easily parried by White's reply. In any case, after 28...\text{Ab}8 29 \text{Ac}3 \text{Wg}5 30 \text{Wh}1 with \text{Aa}7 next, Black is under pressure.

29 \text{Fc}1 \text{Ee}8 30 \text{Ac}3

30 \text{Aa}7 was another tempting option, but Botvinnik prefers a few prophylactic moves before taking concrete action.

30...\text{Cc}7 31 \text{Wh}1 \text{Bb}7

32\text{Ba}2!

Botvinnik has noticed that any rook exchange would seriously weaken Black's blockade, and so takes the first step in this direction.

32...h5

This isn't very constructive but Black was short of active plans. In the event of 32...\text{Wg}5 33 \text{Ca}1 \text{Gg}6, preparing ...\text{Gh}4, then 34 \text{Aa}7! \text{Gh}4 35 \text{Dd}3! \text{Bxa}7 36 \text{Bxa}7 cxd3 37 \text{Bxd}7 leads to a decisive counterattack; e.g. 37...\text{Be}7 38 \text{Bxe}7 \text{Wxe}7 39 \text{Wxd}3 \text{Aa}3 40 \text{Wd}2 with an easy win.

33 \text{Ca}1 b4 34 \text{Bxb}4 \text{Wb}6

Or 34...\text{Be}8 35 \text{Cc}3 \text{Bb}1+ 36 \text{Dd}1 and Black's counterplay is over.

35 \text{Cc}3 \text{We}3 36 \text{Dd}1! \text{Wxd}2 37 \text{Bxd}2 \text{Dd}3

Black's activity is just illusory and Botvinnik soon manages to mobilize his forces, after which the passed pawns will take their toll.

38 \text{Dd}4 \text{Be}8 39 \text{Cc}3!

Curiously, the knight is back where it started, and now rules out the idea of 39...\text{Bb}1.

39...\text{Bb}3 40 h4 \text{Bb}7 41 \text{Aa}8+

In view of e5-e6, Black resigned.

\text{Example 214}

M.Tal-S.Gligoric

Candidates match (game 9), Belgrade 1968

\hspace{1cm} 267
Earlier in the game, Black sacrificed the exchange to arrange a blockade on the dark squares, and now he is just about to complete his plan by $34...\text{\textbullet}e5$.

$34\text{\textbullet}e5$!

A typical idea in the fight against a blockade: a sacrifice of the pawn about to be blocked. Here it helps White clear the e-file and the b1-h7 diagonal for a future attack. We saw other merits of the same idea in Ivanisevic-Solak (p. 237).

$34...\text{\textbullet}xe5$

A second exchange sacrifice with $34...\text{\textbullet}xe5?!$ is interesting – Gligoric, although after $35\text{\textbullet}xe5 \text{\textbullet}xe5 36\text{\textbullet}f5$, intending $\text{h}3-g3$, White obtains attacking prospects anyway.

$35\text{\textbullet}f4$!

Preparing the regrouping with the moves $\text{h}5$ and $\text{g}3$ with focus on the black king.

$35...\text{\textbullet}e7$

Unpinning the knight on $e5$. In the event of $35...\text{\textbullet}cd7$ White should probably just stick to his original plan by $36\text{\textbullet}h5$, whereas the tempting $36\text{\textbullet}a4?!$ permits $36...\text{\textbullet}f8 37\text{\textbullet}xd7 \text{g}6!$, followed by $...\text{\textbullet}xd7$ and Black defends.

$36\text{\textbullet}d4$

Eyeing the multiple weaknesses at $b5$, $c6$ and $f5$. The consequent $36\text{\textbullet}h5$ followed by $37\text{\textbullet}g3$ was also strong.

$36...\text{\textbullet}ed3$

Faced with an attack Gligoric logically resorts to exchanges. The greedy $36...\text{\textbullet}xc4?$ failed to $37\text{\textbullet}xf7! – Tal.

$37\text{\textbullet}xd3 \text{\textbullet}xd3 38\text{\textbullet}xe7 \text{\textbullet}xe7 39\text{\textbullet}e4$!

Tal has estimated that the exchange of queens would leave the d6-pawn short of a reliable defence.

$39...\text{\textbullet}e5 40\text{\textbullet}c6! \text{\textbullet}xc6$

Now a strong passed pawn appears on $c6$, but the desirable $40...\text{\textbullet}g5$ failed to $41\text{\textbullet}xd8 \text{\textbullet}xd8 42\text{\textbullet}c5!$ or $41...\text{\textbullet}xg3 42\text{\textbullet}xf7! – Tal.

$41\text{\textbullet}xc6 \text{\textbullet}e5$

The least of evils, in order to get rid of the backward d-pawn.

$42\text{\textbullet}xe5\text{\textbullet}xe5 43\text{\textbullet}d1 \text{\textbullet}c7 44\text{\textbullet}e4!$

Heading for $d6-b5$ to assist the passed pawn. The game continued $44...\text{\textbullet}f8 45\text{\textbullet}d6 \text{\textbullet}xd6 46\text{\textbullet}xd6 \text{\textbullet}e7 47\text{\textbullet}d5 a4 48\text{\textbullet}c7 b3 49\text{\textbullet}axb3 \text{\textbullet}bx3 50\text{\textbullet}xe5+ \text{\textbullet}d6 51\text{\textbullet}b5 \text{\textbullet}xc7 52\text{\textbullet}xb3$ and Tal soon converted his extra material into victory.

Sometimes a blockade is achieved by means of a pawn sacrifice. Let’s see one such sacrifice, that often appears in openings like the Benoni and the King’s Indian.
Example 215
J.Timman-J.Nunn
London 1975

In this typical position from the Benoni, Black is just one move away from the desired ...b5-b4, when it is not clear where the knight on c3 should go. Timman comes up with a standard antidote.

21...b6

After 21...b6 22 Qxf6+ Qxf6 23 Qxf6 Qxf6 24 Qxe4 White is much better despite the minus pawn - Bukic. The attempt to improve this line by 23...bxc3!? 24 Qxg7 Rxg7 can be met by 25 f6+ Kh8 26 Wxc3 Kf8 27 Wc1, heading for h6, with an attack.

22 Ad1

Supporting a future d5-d6. A tempting alternative was 22 d6 Wc6 23 Qxf6 Qxf6 24 Qxf6+ Qxf6 25 d5, but the exchange sacrifice 25...Wxd6! 26 Qxb6 Wxb6 27 fxg6 fxg6 28 Qxe5 Qg7 seems to yield Black a defendable position.

22...Qxe4 23 Qxe4 f6

Preventing both 24 f6 and 24 Qe7.

24 e3 a6 25 Wg4!

Provoking new weaknesses on the kingside. In contrast, 25 d6?! Wc6 would just help Black in activating his queen.

25...g5 26 h4! h6 27 hxg5 fxg5

Or 27...hxg5 28 Qf3, followed by Qh3 - Bukic.

28 d6 Qd8

19 e5! dxe5 20 f5!

Thanks to the previous pawn sacrifice, White can now use the e4-square as a blockade for one of his knights. Obviously this would not be the case after the immediate 19 f5?, when it is Black who obtains a blocking square on e5.

20...Qf8

Safeguarding the vulnerable f7-pawn. 20...b4?! 21 Qce4 now just helps White, but 20...e4!? was worthy of attention. In the same way as Tal did in the previous example, Black returns the pawn in order to eliminate the enemy blockade. There can follow 21 Qdxe4 Qe5! 22 d6!? Qd7 with a sharp battle.

21 Qe4

By now the merits of the white blockade are evident. Black has been restricted on the a1-h8 diagonal and the e-file, and he can no longer put a knight on e5. Meanwhile, the powerful knight on e4 might prove helpful both in a future kingside attack and as an assistant to the passed d-pawn.
Mastering Chess Strategy

The desirable 28...\(\text{wc6}\) now runs into 29 f6!, when 29...\(\text{xf6}\)? drops a piece to 30 \(\text{we6+}\), and 29...\(\text{xf6}\) 30 \(\text{xf6+ xf6}\) 31 \(\text{xf6! xf6}\) 32 d7 \(\text{a8}\) 33 d8\(\text{w+ xd8}\) 34 \(\text{xd8+}\) also favours White.

29 \(\text{xd5!}\)

Just like in Karpov-Gligoric and Hellsten-Soppe, the squares vacated by a pawn advance are immediately exploited by its fellow pieces.

29...\(\text{b4}\)

30 f6!

A strong pawn sacrifice that clears the light squares towards the black king. Also interesting was 30 \(\text{c5!}\)? \(\text{xc5}\) 31 \(\text{xc4}\) with multiple threats.

30...\(\text{xf6}\)

After 30...\(\text{xf6}\)? 31 \(\text{xf6+ xf6}\) 32 \(\text{xc4 a8}\) 33 \(\text{b6!}\) the discovered check soon takes its toll.

31 \(\text{b5! g7}\)

Indirectly parrying the threat of 32 \(\text{b7}\).

32 \(\text{xf8+ xf8}\) 33 \(\text{xb4}\)

With such a dominant position White has time to pick up one of the pawns.

33...\(\text{a1+}\) 34 \(\text{h2 wa5}\) 35 \(\text{c5!}\)

The white pieces are cooperating nicely. 35 \(\text{xc4? we1}\) was less convincing.

35...\(\text{f1}\)?

Losing track of the d-pawn. Black had to play 35...\(\text{wa8}\) in order to meet 36 d7! by 36...\(\text{xd7!}\). Thus White should prefer the simple capture 36 \(\text{xc4}\) with a big advantage.

36 d7! \(\text{f4}\) 37 \(\text{d1 h4+}\) 38 \(\text{g3 wd8}\)

On 38...\(\text{e6}\) White also decides by 39 \(\text{wd5}\).

39 \(\text{d5+ h7}\) 40 \(\text{b7 g6}\) 41 \(\text{a7! f4}\) 42 \(\text{wa8 xa8}\) 43 \(\text{xa8 e6}\) 44 \(\text{e8!}\)

The enemies of the passed pawn are finished off one by one.

44...\(\text{xc5}\) 45 \(\text{xc5}\)

Curiously, until this moment the knight hadn’t moved even once since its arrival at the blocking square on e4, and that was more than 20 moves ago! Nevertheless, its impact has been strongly felt during the whole game.

45...\(\text{f6}\) 46 \(\text{f8!}\)

In view of 46...\(\text{e7}\) 47 \(\text{f7+}\), Black resigned.

So far we have mainly seen blockades being performed by pieces, in particular by knights. A different kind of blockade, less active but still rather useful, is that conducted with pawns. We already saw in Gligoric-Benko (p. 175) Black trying (in vain) to keep his kingside closed by 23...f5. Here is a more successful case.
Example 216
B.Spassky-T.V.Petrosian
World Championship (game 7),
Moscow 1966

The location of the kings on opposite flanks suggests that both players are aiming for an attack. Before taking concrete action on “his” flank, Petrosian applies a clever prophylactic measure on the queenside.

18...a6!

From now on, Black will always respond to a4-a5 by...b6-b5, and to b4-b5 by...a6-a5, thus keeping the queenside closed.

19 g1

Adequate awareness of his attack is no longer visible, Spassky resorts to defensive play.

19...gd8 20 gg1 gg4 21 wd2 ghg8 22 a5 b5!

Of course. This entire method of placing the pawns next to each other in preparation for a blockade can evidently be applied on any part of the board, and is rather frequent in practice.

23 ad1 af8!

With the strong plan of 24...f6 25 exf6 e5.

24 gh2?

This wins the exchange but leads to the creation of a powerful block of black pawns from the e- to the h-file. Preferable was 24 wd4 gh7 25 gh2! gh8 26 gh1 with a waiting game – Marin.

24...xe5! 25 xg4 hxg4 26 e4 gd6

The white king is now under a cloud. There followed 27 we3 od7 (27...g3! was even stronger – Marin) 28 xd6 wxd6 29 xd4! e5! 30 x2 f5! (vacating f6 for the knight) 31 exd5 f4 32 we4 of6 33 xf5+ xh8 34 f3 xh8! 35 wb1 g3 36 xe1 h3 with a decisive attack.

As discovered by Tigran Petrosian many years ago, sometimes the goal of establishing a blockade can justify the sacrifice of a whole exchange. Typically the rook is sacrificed for the enemy bishop of the same colour as the blocking square. In fact we recently saw Black trying to achieve this in Tal-Gligoric, and here is another example.

Example 217
J.Hellsten-P.Cramling
Malmö 1996

In a King’s Indian battle Black has great compensation for the pawn. Her bishop
pair is strong, the semi-open g- and h-files will be useful in an attack, and the pawns on e5 and f5 control the centre. Only the arrival of the knight at d3 is missing for a complete initiative; e.g. 21 a3?! Qd3 22 Qc2 Wh4 23 We2 e4.

So, how should White cover the d3-square? The natural 21 We2 drops the exchange after 21...f4 followed by 22...d3; while if 21 Qdb1, then 21...e4! and the knight gets to d3 anyway, leaving its counterpart misplaced on b1.

21 We2!

Anyway, I still remember a certain pleasure when making this move, one that Petrosian must have felt many times.

21...f4?

The correct choice in terms of material, but positionally deficient. Black should have tried 21...e4! 22 fxe4 fxe4 instead, when 23 Qb5?! heading for d4, seems to hold the balance; e.g. 23...d3 24 Cd1 followed by Qd4, or 23...xa2 24 Ce1 Cc3 25 Qxc3 Qxc3 26 Wg4 and Black’s bishop pair compensates for the slightly exposed king.

22 Qf2 d3

Or 22...d3 23 Cd1, followed by Qd4 with a big advantage.

23 Qd1 Qxf1 24 Wxf1

In just a few moves the position has changed completely. Black won the exchange but ended up with a bad bishop and a lack of any dynamics whatsoever. On the other hand, White may soon establish a strong blockade on e4 with a knight, where it will dominate the whole board.

24...f5

Preparing 25...h4 in order to get rid of the bad bishop, but White easily parries this idea with his next move. A different solution for this bishop is 24...e4!, eliminating the blockade, although after 25 Qxe4, preparing a2-a3 and Qb5-d4 with focus on e6, White is much better anyway.

25 Qh1! Qh4 26 Qg1 Qf7 27 Qe4 Qg8

Black is logically preparing a kingside attack, but unfortunately some of her key attacking pieces are no longer present on the board, such as the light-squared bishop and the other knight. We will soon see that once the g2-pawn enjoys sufficient protection, the black attack cannot progress. In contrast, White has a rather automatic plan of action on the other flank.

28 a3 Qa6 29 Qc2 Qg6 30 Qb2

Preparing b3-b4 and c4-c5 with an attack at the base of the enemy pawn chain. We saw a similar, though less successful case in Zvjaginsev-Polgar (p. 182).

30...Qd8 31 b4 axb4 32 axb4 Qe7
A more active task is desirable for this bishop, but after 32...\texttt{g}3?! 33 \texttt{c}5 \texttt{wh}4 34 \texttt{c}6 \texttt{bxc}6 35 dxc6! \texttt{db}8 36 \texttt{b}5 \texttt{h}6 37 \texttt{h}3, followed by 38 \texttt{d}5 or 38 \texttt{w}c4, White is practically winning. In contrast, the simple 32...\texttt{db}8!? 33 \texttt{c}5 \texttt{d}7 improving the knight was reasonable.

\textbf{33 \texttt{c}5 \texttt{db}8 34 \texttt{w}c4 \texttt{wh}8?}

In heavy time trouble Cramling overlooks a minor tactical resource that will accelerate the white advance. 34...\texttt{fg}7 was preferable, intending 35 \texttt{c}6?! \texttt{bxc}6 36 dxc6 \texttt{d}5!, followed by 37...\texttt{xc}6 with counterplay. Thus White should rather try 35 \texttt{cx}d6 \texttt{cx}d6 36 \texttt{b}5, followed by 37 \texttt{b}6 and \texttt{db}5-c7-e6, or even 35 \texttt{b}5? at once.

\textbf{35 \texttt{b}5!}

Now that 35...\texttt{dx}c5? fails to 36 \texttt{d}6, Black can’t stop a white pawn from reaching c6.

\textbf{35...\texttt{d}7}

Saving the knight from eternal imprisonment. After 35...\texttt{fg}7 36 \texttt{c}6 Black is strategically doomed; e.g. 36...\texttt{g}8 37 \texttt{wa}2 \texttt{b}6 38 \texttt{g}4! \texttt{fx}g3 39 \texttt{hx}g3 \texttt{h}6+ 40 \texttt{h}2 \texttt{gh}7 41 \texttt{hx}h6 \texttt{x}h6+ 42 \texttt{g}2 \texttt{c}8 43 \texttt{f}2, when the sad knight on b8 means that White’s victory is only a matter of time.

\textbf{36 \texttt{c}6!}

Again exploiting the theme of the exposed rook on f7, i.e. 36...\texttt{bxc}6? 37 dxc6 and White wins.

\textbf{36...\texttt{db}8?}

36...\texttt{db}6 37 \texttt{xb}6 \texttt{cx}b6 38 \texttt{cx}b7 \texttt{wb}8 was a lesser evil, when White could try 39 \texttt{w}c8+ \texttt{g}8 40 \texttt{wc}6! \texttt{f}8 41 \texttt{wb}6 \texttt{xb}7 42 \texttt{wf}2, followed by 43 \texttt{b}6, with an overwhelming advantage.

\textbf{37 \texttt{cx}b7 \texttt{g}8 38 \texttt{a}2}

With the inevitable plan of 39 \texttt{a}8 and 40 \texttt{a}7.

\textbf{38...\texttt{h}4 39 \texttt{a}8 \texttt{fg}7 40 \texttt{wf}1 \texttt{wd}7 41 \texttt{a}7}

In this utterly hopeless position, Black resigned.

For the related exercises to this section, see page 358.

\textbf{The initiative}

In the first chapter I defined the initiative as “some kind of major influence on the battle, without necessarily being an advantage in itself”. Typically we understand an “advantage” as something tangible, at least for the coming 10-15 moves; e.g. more space, a weak enemy pawn, the bishop pair, the opponent’s unsafe king, etc. In contrast, the initiative easily evaporates within a few moves if not sustained. Thus the side with the initiative typically tries to create new threats all the time, and doesn’t shy away from material or positional concessions in order to keep the initiative going. All this might sound a little abstract, so let’s look at some examples.

\textbf{Example 218}

\textbf{T.V.Petrosian-A.Karpov}

\textbf{USSR Championship, Moscow 1974}

In this apparently peaceful position, reminiscent of the Queen’s Gambit Accepted, Petrosian hurries to take the initiative.

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11 e4! \(\mathcal{Qd}b7 12 e5!\)

Accepting doubled pawns in order to increase the pressure. After 12 \(\mathcal{Qg}5 \mathcal{Wb}8!\) it would be more difficult to achieve the e4-e5 advance.

12...\(\mathcal{W}xf3\)

After 12...\(\mathcal{Qg}4?!\) 13 \(\mathcal{f}4!\) the knight on g4 becomes misplaced.

13 \(\mathcal{Gxf}3 \mathcal{Hh}5 14 \mathcal{Dd}1!\)

By pinning the knight White prevents an annoying \(\ldots\mathcal{W}h4\), e.g. 14 \(f4?!\) \(\mathcal{W}h4\) with counterplay.

14...\(\mathcal{W}e7 15 f4 g6\)

Karpov is just one move away from stabilizing his position by 16...\(\mathcal{G}g7\). However...

16 \(f5!\) \(\mathcal{E}xf5 17 e6!\)

Unfortunately for Black, he can’t recapture on e6 due to the hanging knight on d7.

17...\(\mathcal{D}f6 18 \mathcal{E}xf7+ \mathcal{G}g7\)

By now the initiative has been converted into a more stable advantage: a strong passed pawn on f7 supported by the bishop pair. In view of these long term assets, Petrosian is happy to exchange queens.

19 \(\mathcal{Wxe}7! \mathcal{Xe}7 20 \mathcal{G}b5!\)

Heading for the weak square on e6.

20...\(\mathcal{E}ac8\)

A lesser evil was 20...\(\mathcal{Fc}8 21 \mathcal{B}b3 \mathcal{C}c5\), preventing the knight transfer to e6, although after 22 \(\mathcal{D}d4 \mathcal{Xxd}4 23 \mathcal{Xxd}4\) White is much better anyway thanks to his strong bishop pair.

21 \(\mathcal{E}b3 a6 22 \mathcal{D}d4 \mathcal{Fxf}7\)

In view of the devastating threat of 23 \(\mathcal{E}e6+ \mathcal{Xxf}7 24 \mathcal{H}h6!\) Karpov gives up the exchange.

23 \(\mathcal{E}e3 \mathcal{G}g4 24 \mathcal{E}xf7 \mathcal{G}xf7 25 \mathcal{E}ac1!\)

In endgames with an extra exchange, it is generally a good idea to swap the opponent’s remaining rook. White later won.

**Example 219**

P.Svidler-A.Dreev

Russian Championship, Elista 1997

![Chess diagram](image)

Due to his privilege of making the first move, it could be argued that White has a slight initiative from the very beginning of the game. In the above position Black has a sound pawn structure and by castling on the next move he would reach a satisfactory game; e.g. 12 b3?! 0-0 13 \(\mathcal{E}e3 \mathcal{A}a6\), followed by \(\ldots\mathcal{C}c5\). Svidler finds a more energetic continuation.

12 \(f4!\) \(h6\)

The threat of 13 \(f5\) had to be parried, and 12...\(f6?\) failed to 13 \(\mathcal{E}e6\).

13 \(f5 \mathcal{H}h7 14 c5!\)
At the right moment, before the black king castles away from the vulnerable e-file.

14...d6d7

After 14...xc5 15 xe1+, both 15...e7 16 f6! gx6 17 hxh6, intending 17...8d7? 18 xc6, and 15...f8 16 xe3 da6 17 de4 yield White clear compensation for the pawn – Svidler.

15 g5!

Svidler doesn’t give the opponent any chance to relax. Now 15...hxg5?! runs into 16 de6! fxe6 17 wh5+ with a decisive attack, and 16...f8 17 de6+! is equally promising.

15...0-0

After 15...xg5 16 xg5 xg5 17 xe1+ d8 18 de4, followed by d6, White obtains a devastating attack, while 15...xc5 is well met by 16 b4! ca6 17 g6! g8 (or 17...fxg6 18 fxg6 xg6 19 wg4 with multiple threats) 18 b5! with a clear advantage – Svidler. In this latter line, it is worth noting how White uses resources on both flanks to keep his initiative going.

16 g6!

A logical follow-up to the previous move, which softens up the e6-square for the knight. In contrast, after 16 gxh6?! f6 17 hxg7 xe8 Black can hope for more counterplay than in the game.

16...fxg6 17 de6 wc8

White also keeps strong pressure after 17...xc5+ 18 h1 we7 19 xf8 xf8 20 de4!, creating new threats such as 21 f6 and 21 xc5 wc5 22 wc3+.

18 xf8 xc5+

Or 18...xf8 19 f6!, followed by 20 de4, with an attack on the dark squares.

19 wh1 exf8 20 fxg6 xg6

By accurate defensive play Dreev has avoided immediate defeat, and now it seems as if the worst is over for him. How-ever, Svidler finds a strong blow that keeps the initiative going.

21 xh6! de5

After 21...gxh6 22 wg4 wh7 23 xf6! Black is unable to defend his king, e.g. 23...we8 24 xg6! de5 25 xe6 and wins – Svidler.

22 xf4 db7 23 de4

Finally the initiative has transformed into a more stable advantage. Black has just one pawn for the exchange, and his king remains rather unprotected.

23...we8 24 wb3+ wf7

Or 24...f7 25 wg3 with dg5 and wh4 coming up.

25 wg3

25 xb7 db8 26 xa7 xe4 27 xe4 wh5 28 lg2 was even simpler – Svidler.

25...xe4 26 xe4 df6 27 lg2

Also possible was 27 xe5 xe4 28 wg2 wd5 29 xf8+! with a strong attack, but the text doesn’t ruin anything.

27...dh5?

27...ed7 was more solid – Svidler. Now White is able to launch a final attack.

28 wg5 de3 29 xes1 we7 30 xhx5 xe5

Or 30...xe5 31 eae1 de8 32 de4 wins.

31 wf7+ wh8 32 xf5+ df2+ 33 lg1 xh3+ 34 df1

Black resigned.
**Example 220**

**G. Kasparov - A. Miles**

Match (game 3), Basle 1986

In the above position, Black’s strong fianchettoed bishop and the weak pawn on b5 would yield him a long-term advantage if he could just manage to consolidate; e.g. 17 0-0?! 0-0 followed by ...\[f8. Therefore White is urged to act quickly.

**17 e5!**

A strong advance that softens up the e-file, the h2-b8 diagonal and the fourth rank for the white pieces. The pawn that is now lost on d5 has less priority. 17 h4 was inferior due to 17...g4! 18 \[d2 0-0 19 0-0 \[f8 with an unclear game – Kasparov.

**17...0-0!**

Castling away from the vulnerable e-file. In contrast, after 17...\[xd5?! 18 exd6 e6 19 0-0 the strong passed pawn on d6 speaks in White’s favour, while 17...\[xe5 18 \[xe5 \[xe5 (otherwise 19 \[c6 is strong) 19 \[xe5 \[xe5 20 \[xe5 f6 21 \[e4 leaves the black king exposed.

**18 h4!**

White immediately searches for contact with the black king and, in a more long-term perspective, secures the participation of the h1-rook in the battle.

**18...\[xd5!**

Miles again defends well. After 18...\[f8?! 19 e6! or 18...\[b6? 19 hxg5 \[xa4 20 gxh6 White obtains a strong attack, while the endgame arising after 18...\[ab8 19 hxg5 \[xb5 20 \[xb5 \[xb5 21 gxh6 \[xe5 22 \[xe5 \[xe5 23 \[xe5 dxe5 24 \[xa7 \[xb2 25 \[h5! also favours him – Kasparov.

**19 hxg5 \[xe5?**

19...hxg5! was correct, eliminating the dangerous pawn. At this point the tempting 20 \[xg5? backfires after 20...\[xe5 21 \[h4 \[d3+! 22 \[h4 \[f5, so White should prefer 20 \[g4! f6! 21 \[c2? \[xe5 22 \[xe5 dxe5 23 \[h7+ \[f7 24 \[h5+ \[e6 25 \[g6 with attacking chances – Kasparov.

**20 \[xe5 dxe5?!**

20...\[xe5 was a lesser evil, when 21 \[xe5 \[xe5 22 \[e4! keeps a clear advantage – Kasparov.

**21 gxh6 \[f6**

**22 \[h5!**

Winning the e5-pawn, after which the black king will feel even more uncomfortable.

**22...\[h8 23 \[xe5 \[b3**

A nice line is 23...\[xg2 24 \[g4! \[b7 25 \[g7! with a decisive attack – Kasparov.
24 \textit{a3} \textit{wb4+ 25 \textit{d1} \textit{ad8 26 \textit{c6!}}}

Just like in Petrosian-Karpov (p. 273), once the initiative has transformed into a stable advantage White has no objections to an endgame.

26...\textit{xb2 27 \textit{xb2 \textit{xb2 28 \textit{xa7 \textit{ac8 29 \textit{xe7 c4 30 \textit{we2! c3 31 \textit{d3 1-0}}}}}]

\textbf{Example 221}

\textit{J.Ehlvest-V.Topalov}

\textit{Vienna 1996}

In this apparently calm position many of us would probably choose 20...\textit{ac8}, bringing the last piece into play. However, Topalov has spotted a much more powerful idea.

20...\textit{f8!}

Preparing ...\textit{f7-f5} in order to clear the f-file and the h1-a8 diagonal for the black pieces. This idea is further enhanced by White’s g2-g3 earlier on in the game.

21 \textit{d4}

Inviting the black knight into the centre, but there was no other way of preventing ...\textit{f7-f5}. The attempt to create some counterplay by 21 \textit{c5 fails to 21...\textit{dxc5! 22 \textit{bxc5 \textit{ac8}}, winning the c5-pawn – Har Zvi.}}

21...\textit{d4! 22 \textit{xd4 exd4 23 \textit{d3 \textit{ae8}}}

The last piece enters the game, stepping up the pressure on White.

24 \textit{f1?}

A clever try, which could have worked against a less ambitious opponent. Both 24 \textit{f3 \textit{h6!}, heading for e3, and 24 \textit{e1 f5! led to a clear black advantage – Hazai.}}

24...\textit{d7!}

Topalov sidesteps 24...\textit{xe4?! 25 \textit{xe4 \textit{we4 26 \textit{xe4 \textit{xe4 27 \textit{f3}, when his compromised pawn structure yields the opponent reasonable drawing chances.}}}}

25 \textit{e1 f5!}

Finally. Now the white king is under a cloud.

26 \textit{exf5 g5!}

After 26...\textit{wc6 27 \textit{f3 g5 28 \textit{xe8 \textit{xe8 29 f6! White gets some counterplay, so Topalov first forces the knight to g2.}}}}

27 \textit{g2 \textit{wc6 28 f3}}

After 28 \textit{f4 gx4 29 gx4 \textit{f3+ 30 \textit{g1 \textit{e3! Black achieves a better version of the game due to the open g-file.}}} 28...\textit{xf3+ 29 \textit{g1}}

White is just one move away from consolidating by 29 \textit{f1}, so Black should act quickly.

29...\textit{e3!}

Creating a new threat at d3. Now after 30 \textit{dxe3? dxe3 mate is inevitable, while 30 \textit{f1? drops a piece after 30...\textit{wg2+ 31}}}

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\textbf{Example 222}

\textbf{M.Carlsen-D.Jakovenko}

Nanjing 2009

\[
\text{\textit{\textbf{Example 222}}} \quad 
\textbf{M.Carlsen-D.Jakovenko} \\
\textbf{Nanjing 2009}
\]

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example_222.png}
\end{center}

In a typical position from the Exchange Variation of the Queen’s Gambit, Black weakened his queenside by \ldots b7-b6 earlier on in the game, but even so he shouldn’t have any major problems after castling on the next move; e.g. 13 \textit{\textbf{a}c1} 0-0 followed by \ldots \textit{\textbf{a}c8}. Thus there is only one move that can pose him any immediate danger.

\textbf{13 e4!}

Normally this move is harmless without a preceding f2-f3, but Carlsen has observed that after 13...\textit{\textbf{d}xe4}? 14 \textit{\textbf{d}xe4} his isolated d4-pawn is outweighed by Black’s vulnerable king; e.g. 14...\textit{\textbf{w}d5} 15 \textit{\textbf{a}e1} with the double threat of 16 \textit{\textbf{d}d6+} and 16 \textit{\textbf{f}e1}, while the knight is poisoned on e4.

\textbf{13...0-0}

Jakovenko wisely refrains from 13...\textit{\textbf{d}xe4} and prefers to continue his development.

\textbf{14 e5}

White takes advantage of his previous move to create a pawn majority on the kingside.

\textbf{14...\textit{\textbf{w}e6} 15 \textit{\textbf{a}e1} \textit{\textbf{f}e8} 16 \textit{\textbf{h}h4!}}

Preparing \textbf{f4-f5}.

\textbf{16...\textit{\textbf{g}6}}

The active 16...c5 permits 17 \textit{\textbf{b}b5!}, heading for c7 or d6.

\textbf{17 \textit{\textbf{d}xg6} \textit{\textbf{w}xg6}}

After 17...\textit{\textbf{f}xg6} 18 f4, preparing h2-h3, g2-g4 and f4-f5, White is better – Golubev.

\textbf{18 \textit{\textbf{w}d2} \textit{\textbf{f}8} 19 f4 \textit{\textbf{w}f5}}

Preparing a blockade with \ldots \textit{\textbf{e}e6} and \ldots h7-h5, but as we already know from the previous section the queen is not the best blocker, and Carlsen finds a strong antidote. Probably 19...f5!? followed by \ldots \textit{\textbf{e}e6} was a better choice, when White could prepare either a g2-g4 breakthrough as in Gligoric-Benko (p. 175), or b4-b5 with a delayed minority attack.

\textbf{20 \textit{\textbf{d}d1}}

Heading for e3 in order to challenge the enemy blockade.

\textbf{20...\textit{\textbf{f}6}}

The consequent 20...\textit{\textbf{e}e6} 21 \textit{\textbf{e}e3} \textit{\textbf{w}e4} can be met by 22 \textit{\textbf{c}c2} \textit{\textbf{w}f5} 23 \textit{\textbf{f}f2!?}, pro-
tecting the queen in advance. Now after 23...\textit{a}c8 24 \textit{d}e3 \textit{w}e4 25 \textit{f}5! the intended 25...\textit{w}xd4? no longer works, while 25...\textit{c}xd4? is equally flawed due to 26 \textit{d}d1! \textit{w}g4 27 \textit{f}4.

21 \textit{d}e3 \textit{w}d7

By playing 20...\textit{f}6 Jakovenko managed to prevent 22 \textit{f}5 at this moment, but Carlsen finds a way to step up the pressure.

22 \textit{w}d3!

Enabling \textit{d}f5-d6.

22...\textit{x}e5 23 \textit{d}xe5 \textit{d}e6

Black is ready to meet 24 \textit{f}5 by 24...\textit{c}5 with some counterplay, but White possesses a much stronger continuation.

24 \textit{f}5! \textit{d}c5 25 \textit{w}d4

Now the connected pawns are ready to start an attack on Black’s king by \textit{f}5-\textit{f}6 or \textit{e}5-\textit{e}6.

25...\textit{e}4

This drops a pawn, but it was not easy to find a good defence.

26 \textit{xd}5! \textit{xd}5

26...\textit{xd}5 obviously failed to 27 \textit{xe}4, while after 26...\textit{c}5? 27 \textit{f}6! \textit{ed}8! 28 \textit{f}7+ \textit{wh}8 29 \textit{wh}4! \textit{xd}5 30 \textit{e}6! \textit{exe}6 31 \textit{wh}7 White has a strong attack – Golubev.

27 \textit{xe}4 \textit{bd}8 28 \textit{e}6 \textit{exe}4 29 \textit{exe}4

With a sound extra pawn and more active pieces, White is much better in the rook endgame. Carlsen soon realized his advantage by \textit{g}4-\textit{g}5 and eventually \textit{f}5-\textit{f}6.

Here is an older example that shows once more the close relation between the initiative and an inventive use of tactics.

\textbf{Example 223}

\textit{M.Euwe-E.Bogoljubow}

Match (game 6), Amsterdam 1928

At first glance Black seems to have a more active game, with concrete threats like 13...\textit{xf}3, winning the exchange, and 13...\textit{xd}2, snatching the \textit{e}4-pawn.

13 \textit{g}4!

A compromising advance that weakens
several squares on the kingside, but Euwe has observed that a precise sequence of moves will yield him a promising initiative. Much less appealing was 13 e5?! \( \text{d}d5 \), heading for c3, or 13 c3? \( \text{d}d3 \) 14 cxb4 \( \text{x}b2 \), followed by 15...\( \text{d}d3 \) and Black even wins a pawn.

**13...\( \text{g}6 \)** 14 a3! \( \text{xd}2 \)

A forced reply, since 14...\( \text{a}5 \) 15 b4 \( \text{a}4 \) failed to 16 \( \text{xf}6 \) \( \text{xf}6 \) 17 \( \text{bxa}5 \).

**15 \( \text{xd}2 \) \( \text{c}7 \)**

Bogoljubow vacates d8 for the rooks and prepares ...e6-e5 followed by ...\( \text{e}6 \)-f4, after which only Black can be better. Therefore White has to act quickly.

**16 \( \text{f}3 \)**

A power move that transfers the queen to a strong post on c3.

**16...e5**

A logical follow-up, but 16...\( \text{ad}8 \)?: 17 \( \text{ad}1 \) e5 might have been more precise; e.g. 18 \( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{exe}4 \) 19 \( \text{exe}4 \) \( \text{exe}4 \) 20 \( \text{exe}5 \) \( \text{exe}5 \) 21 \( \text{exe}5 \) \( \text{xd}1 \) 22 \( \text{xd}1 \) f6 with an inferior, yet holdable endgame.

**17 \( \text{c}3 \)! \( \text{fd}7 \)**

After 17...\( \text{cd}7 \)?: 18 \( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{fe}8 \) 19 \( \text{ad}1 \) Black has a problem with the e5-pawn.

Bogoljubow is just one move away from the desired 18...\( \text{e}6 \), followed by 19...\( \text{f}4 \). However, Euwe has a powerful reply prepared, one that will keep his initiative intact.

**18 \( \text{f}4 \)**

Just at the right moment, when the pawn on e5 can’t move due to the mate on g7, while 18...\( \text{e}6 \)? obviously runs into 19 \( \text{f}5 \).

**18...\( \text{f}6 \)** 19 \( \text{b}4 \)

Taking the opportunity to displace the enemy knight. Less precise was 19 \( \text{f}5 \)? \( \text{f}7 \), when 20 \( \text{b}4 \) fails to 20...\( \text{a}4 \). Now, on the other hand, Black can’t play 19...\( \text{a}4 \) due to 20 \( \text{b}3 \).

**19...\( \text{a}6 \)** 20 \( \text{f}5 \)

Finishing off the enemy idea of a blockade on e5, and preparing \( g4 \)-g5 with an attack at the base of the black pawn chain.

**20...\( \text{f}7 \)** 21 \( \text{f}1 \)

Obviously this bishop had no more tasks along the h1-a8 diagonal.

**21...\( \text{fd}8 \)** 22 \( \text{g}2 \)

Some sensible prophylaxis against a potential queen check.

**22...\( \text{b}6 \)** 23 \( \text{c}1 \)

Avoiding a fork on a4. Curiously, both bishops are now excellently placed on their original squares.

**23...\( \text{a}4 \)** 24 \( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{d}6 \)** 25 \( \text{g}5 \)

White is finally ready for concrete action. The attempt to stop this blow by 24...h6 obviously made little sense after 25 \( \text{h}4 \).

**25...\( \text{fxg}5 \)?**

After 25...\( \text{h}8 \) 26 \( \text{f}3 \) or 26 \( \text{g}6 \) Black faces a strong attack, but the text is a positional surrender due to the weak e5-pawn.

**26 \( \text{f}3 \)! \( \text{h}6 \)**

Or 26...\( \text{e}8 \) 27 \( \text{gx}5 \), followed by 28 \( \text{ad}1 \), and White is much better.

**27 \( \text{xe}5 \)** 28 \( \text{xf}7 \)

Simplifying to a clearly superior endgame.

**28...\( \text{w}xg3 \)** 29 \( \text{xg}3 \) \( \text{xf}7 \)**
30 c4!

This and the next move clear some space for the bishop pair. The tempting 30 e5 can wait.

30...d6 31 h4! gxh4+ 32 xh4 xd4?

Dropping a pawn, but after 32...a6 33 xf4 xe8 34 e5 xd4 35 g3 Black's position is also hopeless.

33 xf4 xe8 34 xe5! xd2 35 cxb5 cxb5 36 xxb5 xb6 37 ac1

Euwe soon converted his overwhelming advantage into victory.

In Petrosian-Karpov we saw how the fight for the initiative motivated minor positional concessions, such as weak squares and doubled pawns. Another common idea in practice is a minor sacrifice to obtain or maintain the initiative. Here are a few examples on this topic.

Example 224

V. Topalov-I. Smirin
Polanica Zdroj 1995

In a Sicilian battle Black is one move away from 19...0-0 with a decent game, thanks to the strong knight on e4 that obstructs a potential enemy attack on the kingside. Thus White is urged to act quickly.

19 f5!

A strong pawn sacrifice that puts some pressure on e6 and clears the f-file towards the black king.

19...xe5 20 fxe6 xe6

In the event of 20...0-0, returning the pawn in order to secure the king, then 21 xf5! wd6 22 xe4 dxe4 23 wb3 with double threats at b7 and f7 – Ribli. After the text Black intends 21...xf6 followed by ...0-0, after which White’s initiative would slowly evaporate. So how can he keep it going?

21 cb5!

Exploiting the fact that 21...axb5? fails to 22 xb5+, followed by xb7, White cre-
ates the new threat of 22 •c7+. Less convincing was 21 •f4?! •f6, when White lacks a useful discovered attack.

21... •c5

After 21...•c8?! 22 •xc8+ •xc8 23 •c6! •xb2 24 •c7+ •d7 25 •xd5! the attack is decisive – Ftacnik.

22 •e2 •c8

Parrying the double threat of 23 b4 and 23 •f3. Once more 22...xb5? was impossible due to 23 •xb5+ •d8 24 •xc5! •xc5 25 •f7?! •d6 26 •g5+ with mate coming – Ribli.

23 •a7!

Again White finds a way of keeping up the pressure. Now a rook move to a8 or b8 runs into 24 •ac6, while 23...•d6? fails to 24 •f3.

23...•c7 24 b4!

By dislodging the enemy knight Topalov revives the •ac6 idea.

24...•xa4 25 •ac6

25 •xc7?! •xc7 26 •xe6 •e5 is less convincing – Krasenkow.

25...•e4

The only square; 25...•d6? runs into 26 •f4.

If 27...•f6, then 28 •f1. Now, in contrast, Smirin is ready to meet 28 •f1 by 28...•f6. However, White has a much stronger option at his disposal.

28 •xg7! •xg7 29 •xe6 •b2 30 •xc7+

The clever temporary sacrifice on g7 has left the black king without shelter.

30...•d7 31 •xb2

Also strong was 31 •b8+! •xb8 32 •g4+ •d8 33 •e6+, followed by decisive checks on g8 and c7.

31...•xb2 32 •e5+ •d6 33 •f7+ •d7 34 •e5+!

White wins with ease after 34 •xh8 •d6 35 •xa6 •xa6 36 •a1, followed by •a7+, but Topalov doesn’t want to suspend the attack yet.

34...•d6 35 •f4 •f8

Or 35...•g8 36 •c4+ •d7 37 •xb2 d4 38 •g3 •d6 39 •a4!, hanging on to the extra piece – Krasenkow.

36 •c4+ •d7 37 •b6+!

In view of 37...•d8 38 •e6+ •e8 39 •xf8, Black resigned.

Example 225

G.Kaidanov-A.Onischuk
Chicago 2002

26 •f4!

Topalov doesn’t give the opponent any chance to relax.

26...•g6 27 •g4 •f7
In this Nimzo-Indian structure White counts on the bishop pair, but Black has the sounder pawn formation and his bishop on c4 is rather annoying for the opponent. Kaidanov found an astonishing way of seizing the initiative.

14...\(\textbf{\textit{xa2}}\)!! \textbf{\textit{xa2}}

If Black doesn’t take the rook then its arrival at f2 will make the black king a bit more concerned; e.g. 14...b5 15 \textbf{\textit{f2}} a5 16 \textbf{\textit{f5}} b4!? 17 g4!, preparing g4-g5, with a strong attack.

15 \textbf{\textit{xa2}} \textbf{\textit{f8}}

A sensible manoeuvre in order to reinforce the kingside defence.

16 0-0 \textbf{\textit{g6}}

17 \textbf{\textit{d2}}

A last preparatory move before taking concrete action. It is worth noting that the bishop on a2 has become a giant after the departure of its counterpart.

17...\textbf{\textit{wd7}} 18 \textbf{\textit{xf5}}! \textbf{\textit{wd8}}?

Black somehow regrets his previous move and yields White two extra tempi in the attack. 18...\textbf{\textit{xe4}}? was equally bad due to 19 \textbf{\textit{xf7+}}! \textbf{\textit{h8}} (both recaptures fail to 20 \textbf{\textit{h6+}}) 20 \textbf{\textit{xe6}} hxe6 21 \textbf{\textit{wh3+}} \textbf{\textit{g8}} 22 \textbf{\textit{h6+}}. Instead, a counter sacrifice with 18...\textbf{\textit{xe4}}! 19 \textbf{\textit{xf6}} \textbf{\textit{xf4}}! was called for, when there can follow 20 \textbf{\textit{b1}} d5 21 \textbf{\textit{xe4}} \textbf{\textit{xe4}} 22 \textbf{\textit{xf4}} \textbf{\textit{g7}} 23 \textbf{\textit{e1}} and the white initiative has evaporated into rough equality – Kaidanov. Evidently such lines aren’t easily visualized over the board, thus in practice it is often easier to play with the initiative than against it. Now back to the position after 18...\textbf{\textit{wd8}}.

At first sight it is not clear how to proceed with White. The straightforward 19 g4? fails to 19...\textbf{\textit{xe4}}, intending 20 g5 \textbf{\textit{g4+}}, while 19 \textbf{\textit{b1}} \textbf{\textit{f8}} 20 g4 \textbf{\textit{d7}} isn’t convincing either. Kaidanov finds a third, ingenious option.

19 e5! dxe5 20 e4!

At the cost of just one pawn White has managed to integrate the dark-squared bishop into the attack.

20...\textbf{\textit{exd4}} 21 \textbf{\textit{xd7}}!

Exploiting the exposed position of the knight on f6. In contrast, the natural 21 \textbf{\textit{cxd4?!}} runs into 21...\textbf{\textit{h4!}} 22 \textbf{\textit{h4}} \textbf{\textit{d4+}} 23 \textbf{\textit{e3}} \textbf{\textit{xe4}} 24 \textbf{\textit{xe4}} \textbf{\textit{xe4}} with a slightly better endgame for Black – Kaidanov.

21...\textbf{\textit{e5}}

The only move, since both 21...\textbf{\textit{xg7}}? 22 \textbf{\textit{g5}} and 21...\textbf{\textit{h4}}? 22 \textbf{\textit{g3}} \textbf{\textit{xe4}} 23 \textbf{\textit{g4}} win for White. Now, on the other hand, 22 \textbf{\textit{g3}}? fails to 22...\textbf{\textit{xe4}}.

22 \textbf{\textit{h3}} dxc3

Since 22...\textbf{\textit{xe4}}?! 23 \textbf{\textit{xe8}} \textbf{\textit{xe8}} 24...
h6! \( \text{	extit{xc}}3 \) 25 \( \text{	extit{b}}3 \) leads to a decisive attack, Black opts to deflect the bishop from the c1-h6 diagonal.

23 \( \text{	extit{x}}c3 \) ! \( \text{	extit{xc}}7 \) 24 \( \text{	extit{g}}3+ \)

White is finally ready to recover the material. In contrast, 24 \( \text{	extit{xe}}5 \) ? lets Black escape after 24...\( \text{	extit{xe}}5 \) 25 \( \text{	extit{g}}3+ \) \( \text{	extit{g}}4! \) 26 \( \text{	extit{xg}}4+ \) \( \text{	extit{g}}5 \) 27 \( \text{	extit{xf}}7+ \) \( \text{	extit{h}}8 \) etc.

24...\( \text{	extit{g}}6 \) 25 \( \text{	extit{xf}}6+ \) \( \text{	extit{xf}}6 \) 26 \( \text{	extit{xf}}6 \) \( \text{	extit{xf}}6 \)

27 \( \text{	extit{h}}4! \)

The fight for the initiative continues even after reaching the endgame. Now Black is faced with the threat of 28 \( \text{	extit{g}}5+ \) \( \text{	extit{g}}7 \) 29 \( \text{	extit{h}}5 \). Less convincing was 27 \( \text{	extit{xc}}7?! \) \( \text{	extit{e}}5 \) or 27 \( \text{	extit{f}}3+?! \) \( \text{	extit{g}}7 \) 28 \( \text{	extit{xf}}7+ \) \( \text{	extit{h}}6 \).

27...\( \text{	extit{e}}5 \) 28 \( \text{	extit{f}}3+ \) \( \text{	extit{g}}7 \) 29 \( \text{	extit{h}}5! \) \( \text{	extit{f}}6 \)

Black has to give up his knight, since any move with it would lead to the loss of the rook after a check on f7 or g3.

30 \( \text{	extit{hxg}}6 \) \( \text{	extit{hxg}}6 \) 31 \( \text{	extit{wd}}3 \)

White later converted his material advantage into victory.

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**Example 226**

G.Soppe-P.Ricardi

Argentine Championship,

Buenos Aires 1999

In a typical King’s Indian structure...
17 \( \text{Kd3} \)
The white queen was short of safe squares; e.g. \( 17 \text{Kd1? Qc3} \) or \( 17 \text{Kc7? Ke5} \), while \( 17 \text{Kc5?} \) runs into \( 17...\text{Ke6!} \) with the strong threat of \( 18...\text{Kf8} \).

17...\( \text{Kf5} \) 18 \( \text{Kxc4 Kxb1} \) 19 \( \text{Kxb1 Kxd8} \)

Black finally managed to restore the material balance, with a clear initiative thanks to his active pieces.

20 \( \text{g3} \)

Avoiding back rank mates. In the event of \( 20 \text{a3 Qc3} 21 \text{c1?! Qd1!} \) White runs into tactical problems; e.g. \( 22 \text{Kf1 c3!} 23 \text{Kxd1} \text{Kxd1} 24 \text{Kxd1 Ke1+} 25 \text{Kxe1 Ke1} \) with a decisive extra pawn in the endgame – Huzman.

20...\( \text{Qc3} \) 21 \( \text{Kf1} \)

Example 227
J.Hellsten-Z.Azmaiparashvili
Greek Team Championship 2003
Modern Defence (A41)

1 \( \text{d4} \) d6 2 \( \text{Qf3} \) g6 3 c4 \( \text{Kg7} \) 4 \( \text{Qc3} \) e5 5 \( \text{Qg5?} \)

My opponent is an expert on the position arising after 5 dxe5 dxe5 6 \( \text{Kxd8+} \) \( \text{Kxd8} \), so I preferred to take the game into more unexplored terrain.

5...\( \text{f6} \) 6 \( \text{Kd2} \)

White managed to provoke ...f7-f6, but d2 is hardly an ideal place for the bishop.

6...\( \text{Qc6} \)
Others options are 6...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\text{e7}\) and 6...\(\text{\textit{exd4}}\) 7 \(\text{\textit{Qxd4 f5}}\).

\(7 \text{\textit{d5 c7 8 e4 f5?!}}\)

8...\(\text{\textit{Qh6}}\) was safer, as in the game L.Ftacnik-E.Ermenkov, Budapest 1993.

With 8...\(\text{\textit{f5}}\) Black aims for an improved King’s Indian after ...\(\text{\textit{Qf6}}\) and ...0-0, but White prevents this plan by his following, strong move.

\(9 \text{\textit{c5!}}\)

Preparing an annoying check on b5 and undermining the black pawn chain. As we will see next, the sacrificed pawn is well invested.

\(9...\text{\textit{dxc5}}\)

Azmaiparashvili accepts the challenge. 9...\(\text{\textit{a6?!}}\) was a safer choice, when 10 \(\text{\textit{b4 c7}}\) \(\text{\textit{c4}}\) keeps the initiative.

\(10 \text{\textit{b5+! c6}}\)

Practically the only move, since both 10...\(\text{\textit{Qd7?!}}\) 11 \(\text{\textit{Qg5}}\) \(\text{\textit{c6}}\) 12 \(\text{\textit{dxc6 bxc6}}\) 13 \(\text{\textit{c4}}\) and 10...\(\text{\textit{c6}}?!\) 11 \(\text{\textit{dxc6 Qxc6}}\) 12 \(\text{\textit{c4}}\) leave the black king in serious danger.

\(11 \text{\textit{a4}}\)

Parrying in advance the enemy plan of ...\(\text{\textit{a7-a6}}\) and ...\(\text{\textit{b7-b5}}\).

\(11...\text{\textit{c6 12 d0-0 a6}}\)

Or 12...\(\text{\textit{fxe4}}\) 13 \(\text{\textit{Qg5}}\) soon recovering the pawn.

\(13 \text{\textit{c4 d6 14 Qe1!}}\)

One more piece joins the battle, with pressure against the weak pawn on \(\text{\textit{e5}}\). Less logical was 14 \(\text{\textit{fxe5?! Qxe5}}\) when Black is helped with his development.

\(14...\text{\textit{fxe4}}\)

My previous move was partly motivated by the line 14...\(\text{\textit{f4}}\) 15 \(\text{\textit{Qxf4! exf4}}\) 16 \(\text{\textit{e5}}\), when White recovers the piece with a strong initiative; e.g. 16...\(\text{\textit{Qd8}}\) 17 \(\text{\textit{Qxf6 Qxf6}}\) 18 \(\text{\textit{Qe4}}\) etc.

\(15 \text{\textit{Qg5 Qf5}} 16 \text{\textit{Qb3!}}\)

The obvious 16 \(\text{\textit{Qxe4?!}}\) permits 16...\(\text{\textit{Qxe4}}\) 17 \(\text{\textit{Qxe4 Qxe4}}\) 18 \(\text{\textit{Qxe4 Qf5!}}\), followed by ...\(\text{\textit{Qd4}}\), with some counterplay.

By playing 16 \(\text{\textit{Qb3}}\) White develops one more piece with tempo and now plans either \(\text{\textit{Qa1-d1}}\), protecting the \(\text{\textit{d5}}\)-pawn and enhancing a future \(\text{\textit{Qg5-e6(+)}}\), or \(\text{\textit{g2-g4?!}}\), fighting for the light squares on \(\text{\textit{e4}}\) and \(\text{\textit{f5}}\).

\(16...\text{\textit{Qb6}}\)

After 16...\(\text{\textit{b6}}\) 17 \(\text{\textit{Qad1 h6}}\) 18 \(\text{\textit{Qe6+ Qxe6}}\) 19 \(\text{\textit{dxex6}}\) White has a strong initiative; e.g. 19...\(\text{\textit{Qc6}}\) 20 \(\text{\textit{Qxe4! Qxe4}}\) 21 \(\text{\textit{Qf3+! Qf6}}\) 22 \(\text{\textit{Qxh6 Qe7}}\) 23 \(\text{\textit{Qd7}}\) with decisive threats.

\(17 \text{\textit{Qa2}}\)

My first intention was 17 \(\text{\textit{d6?!}}\), but after 17...\(\text{\textit{Qc6!}}\) 18 \(\text{\textit{Qb5 Qd8}}\) the game becomes murky.

\(17...\text{\textit{Qd6}} 18 \text{\textit{Qb3}}\)

Before opting for one of the abovemen-
tioned plans, White regroups the queen to a3 where it will eye the c5-pawn. Both 18 \textit{\texttt{H}}d1 and 18 g4 were possible as well.

\textbf{18...\texttt{W}}b6 19 \texttt{W}a3! \texttt{W}d6

After 19...\texttt{W}b4? 20 \texttt{W}a2! the queen becomes exposed on b4. By playing 19...\texttt{W}d6 Black offered a draw (i.e. 20 \texttt{W}b3), but I was already too thrilled about my position, and even messed it up a little.

\textbf{20 g4?}

Much stronger was 20 \texttt{H}d1! h6 21 \texttt{Q}e6+ \texttt{Q}xe6 22 dxe6 \texttt{Q}c6 23 \texttt{Q}g5! (securing a protected square on e4 for the knight) 23...\texttt{Q}d4 24 \texttt{Q}xf6 \texttt{Q}xf6 25 \texttt{Q}xe4, followed by \texttt{Q}xc5, with a clear edge thanks to the active pieces and the strong passed pawn on e6.

\textbf{20...h6!}

A clever intermediate move that avoids a white knight settling on e4.

\textbf{21 \texttt{Q}gxe4 \texttt{Q}xe4 22 \texttt{Q}xe4 \texttt{Q}xe4 23 \texttt{Q}xe4 \texttt{Q}d5}

When playing 20 g4 I had forgotten that, from a3, the queen no longer protects the d5-pawn. Fortunately White's position still has a lot of potential.

\textbf{24 \texttt{W}b3 \texttt{Q}d8}

Or 24...\texttt{Q}b6 25 \texttt{Q}c3, preparing \texttt{Q}ae1.

\textbf{25 \texttt{W}xb7 \texttt{Q}f6}

A critical position has arisen. In view of

\textbf{26 \texttt{Q}e2 \texttt{W}d4!} with some counterplay, I decided to give up the exchange in order to keep the initiative on my side.

\textbf{26 \texttt{Q}c3?}

With hindsight 26 \texttt{Q}e2! \texttt{W}d4 27 \texttt{W}xc7 was the best option; e.g. 27...\texttt{Q}d7 28 \texttt{W}b8+ \texttt{Q}d8 29 \texttt{W}b3! \texttt{W}xg4+ 30 \texttt{Q}h1, when White's safer king and the passive rook on h8 speak in his favour.

\textbf{26...\texttt{W}b6?}

In his desire to simplify, Black transposes to a bad endgame. 26...\texttt{Q}xg4 27 \texttt{W}xe4 h5! was correct, when it is not clear whether White's initiative can be converted into something more tangible; e.g. 28 \texttt{Q}f1 g5 29 f4!? gxf4 30 \texttt{W}xf4+ \texttt{Q}e8! with complications.

\textbf{27 \texttt{W}xb6 cxb6 28 \texttt{Q}xe5 b5?!}

Eliminating the potential passed pawn on a4 but, more significantly, activating the enemy rook on a1. After 28...\texttt{Q}xg4 29 \texttt{Q}e6 \texttt{Q}xc3 30 bxc3 Black is also suffering, but this was the least of his evils. By the way, the attempt to improve this line by 29...\texttt{Q}d4? fails to 30 h3!.

\textbf{29 axb5 axb5 30 \texttt{Q}xb5 \texttt{Q}xg4}

Perhaps Azmaiparashvili had prepared 30...\texttt{Q}d5? and only now saw the reply 31 \texttt{H}xd5! \texttt{H}xd5 32 \texttt{H}a8+ \texttt{Q}e7 33 \texttt{H}a7+. 31 \texttt{H}e4!
Activity above material. In contrast, after 31 \textit{\textbf{xc}5?! }\textit{\textbf{xc}3 32 bxc3 }\textit{\textbf{h}7!} Black is still alive.

\textbf{31...h5}

31...\textit{\textbf{xc}3 32 bxc3 }\textit{\textbf{g}6 33 f4 }\textit{\textbf{d}6} was slightly more tenacious, although after 34 \textit{\textbf{a}8+! g7 35 }\textit{\textbf{a}7+ f8 36 }\textit{\textbf{c}4} White wins.

\textbf{32 f4+ g8 33 c4+ h7 34 f7}

In view of 34...\textit{\textbf{hg}8 35 }\textit{\textbf{aa}7}, Black resigned.

For the related exercises, see page 361.

The link between tactics and strategy

When I was a kid and a newcomer to this game, I often heard older and more experienced players make a division of chess players into two different groups: tacticians and positional players. However, I soon noticed in my own games that the supposed tacticians would often find good squares for their pieces, seize open files and effect favourable exchanges, while the “positional” players weren’t that bad at forks and pins after all. Many years later, my experience tells me that every game contains a high amount of both tactical and strategic challenges, and these are often closely related and intertwined. Therefore both strategy and tactics have to be mastered in order to aspire to any success, no matter what our personal style. As for a classification of chess players, if such is really needed then Dvoretsky’s division into “intuitive” and “scientific” players probably makes more sense.

Now let’s talk a little more about the link between tactics and strategy in chess. As you have noticed, despite the strategic focus of this book, its examples are filled with tactical considerations, on almost every move. As I mentioned in the first chapter, it is simply impossible to conduct the strategical battle without paying attention to tactical details. For example, we saw on several occasions how a superior position was converted into victory by means of an opportune use of tactical arms, as in Pelletier-Sebag (p. 44), Kasparov-Martinovic (p. 136), Short-Kasparov (p. 205), and Hall-Hjelm (p. 243), to name just a few.

In the following, we will have a look at some examples where the link between tactics and strategy is particularly explicit. To start with, here are a few cases where a lack of tactical considerations led one of the players into disaster.

\textbf{Example 228}

\textbf{O.Renet-B.Züger}

\textbf{Leukerbad 1992}

In a typical French battle Black desires to transfer his bishop on d7 to a more active post on h5, but he chose the wrong moment.

\textbf{20...\textit{\textbf{e}8??}}

A prophylactic measure such as 20...\textit{\textbf{wc}7} was called for.
21 \textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf6!}}}}

After 21...gxf6 22 b4 the other bishop is trapped, so Black resigned. Perhaps Züger ruled out \textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf6}}} in his mind due to its “anti-positional” look, and duly paid for it.

\textbf{Example 229}
\textbf{J.Sriram-R.Laxman}
Indian Championship, Mumbai
2009

19 \textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xh7 +! h8}}}}

If 19...\textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xh7}}}, then 20 \textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{wc2+} followed by 21 bxa3.}}}}

20 \textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{fxg7+ xg7} 21 \textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e5+!}}}}}}}

At last White achieves his desired queen check.

21...\textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} 22 \textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g3+ xh7} 23 bxa3}}}}

With a decisive material advantage.

\textbf{Example 230}
\textbf{T.Wall-C.Ward}
Wrexham 1998

White has just played e4-e5, with some attacking prospects.

17...\textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf3??}}}}

Before moving his knight Black aims at eliminating the potential attacker on f3. Just like 20...\textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e8}} in the previous example, his idea is strategically well founded but tactically flawed.}}

18 \textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{exf6!}}}}

Another intermediate move, and there are more to come. At this moment Black in fact resigned, but let’s see how the game could have concluded.

18...\textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xa3}}}}

Or 18...\textit{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xe2}}} 19 \textit{\texttt{fxe7}}, winning a piece. The text leaves both queens en prise, but White finds a clever way of withdrawing his one with check.

White has adopted some kind of Hedgehog with reversed colours. Now the dynamic 20 d4! was called for; e.g. 20...e4 21
e5! \( \textit{cxb4} \) 22 \( \textit{a3 a5} \) 23 \( \textit{c4} \), recovering the pawn with a slight initiative.

\textbf{20 c3?}

A natural move that protects the b4-pawn and prepares \( \textit{wb2} \) with increased pressure on e5. However, Black possesses a little tactical trick that will yield him a clear strategical superiority.

\textbf{20...\( \textit{d4} \)}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessDiagram.png}
\end{center}

\textbf{21 \( \textit{xd4} \)}

After 21 \( \textit{exd4} \) \( \textit{exd4} \) the piece is regained with serious damage to White’s pawn structure.

\textbf{21...\( \textit{exd4} \) 22 e4 \( \textit{ac8} \)}

Heading for the entry square at c3.

\textbf{23 \( \textit{xc8} \) \( \textit{xc8} \) 24 \( \textit{c1 c3} \)}

After the departure of the dark-squared bishop, there is nobody in the white camp covering this square.

\textbf{25 \( \textit{d1?} \)}

A misguided attempt for counterplay, but White’s position was difficult anyway.

\textbf{25...\( \textit{xc1} \) 26 \( \textit{xc1} \) \( \textit{xb4} \) 27 \( \textit{c7 b1} \) 28 h4 \( \textit{xd1+} \) 29 \( \textit{h2 xd3} \) 30 \( \textit{b8+ f8} \) 31 \( \textit{xb7 a3} \)}

Black soon realized his material advantage.

Tactical resources are often associated with the win of material or mate, but they can also be used for reaching different strategical objectives, such as improving a piece, creating weaknesses in the enemy camp, etc. In fact we just witnessed this in Wall-Ward, and the book contains several other cases on the same topic, such as Yudovich-Klaman with 26 \( \textit{a5} \) (p. 61), Piket-Timman with 12 \( \textit{h3} \) (p. 103), Hellsten-Llorens with 24 \( \textit{e4} \) (p. 110), and Sokolov-Karaklajic with 24 \( \textit{f5} \) (p. 251). Here are some more examples.

\textbf{Example 231}

\textbf{A.Alekhine-M.Euwe}

World Championship (game 1), Holland 1935

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessDiagram2.png}
\end{center}

At first sight the position seems roughly level, but Alekhine finds a clever way of intertwining tactics and strategy, one that will lead the opponent into difficulties.

\textbf{19 b4!}

Initiating a minority attack, with focus on the c6-pawn. Unfortunately for Black, the pawn cannot be taken: \( \textit{wxb4??} \) fails to 20 \( \textit{x5} \), while after 19...\( \textit{xb4?!} \) 20 \( \textit{b3 c7 21 e4! d6} \) 22 \( \textit{d4} \) he is forced into 22...\( g5 \) 23 \( \textit{xg5} \) with an ugly position.

\textbf{19...c7 20 b5! c5 21 f5 f6}
After 21...\textit{f6} 22 \textit{\underline{e}3!} \textit{\underline{e}6} 23 \textit{\underline{d}5} \textit{\underline{x}d5} 24 \textit{\underline{x}d5} Black is also under pressure. 22 \textit{\underline{e}3} \textit{\underline{e}6} 23 \textit{\underline{d}5}!

Eliminating the main defender of the light squares.

23...\textit{\underline{x}d5} 24 \textit{\underline{e}xd5} \textit{\underline{w}a5}

Or 24...\textit{\underline{d}8} 25 \textit{\underline{x}e5} \textit{\underline{f}xe5} 26 \textit{\underline{w}f5}! with a decisive advantage – Alekhine; but in the game Black runs into even bigger problems. 25 \textit{\underline{f}5} \textit{\underline{w}e1+} 26 \textit{\underline{g}2} \textit{\underline{d}8} 27 \textit{\underline{x}e5} \textit{\underline{f}xe5} 28 \textit{\underline{d}7}!

Alekhine is not interested in picking up pawns when the final attack is near. 28...\textit{\underline{f}6} 29 \textit{\underline{h}6+!} \textit{\underline{h}8} 30 \textit{\underline{x}c5}

Black resigned. There could have followed 30...\textit{\underline{e}8} 31 \textit{\underline{w}d5!} \textit{\underline{g}xh6} 32 \textit{\underline{w}f7} with mate.

\textbf{Example 232}

\textbf{B.Ivkov-E.Gufeld}

Sarajevo 1964

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textit{\underline{w}d6} & \textit{\underline{x}e5} & \textit{\underline{a}6} \\
\hline
\textit{\underline{w}b5} & \textit{\underline{w}d5} & \textit{\underline{x}d5} \\
\hline
\textit{\underline{d}3} & \textit{\underline{w}d6} & \textit{\underline{b}5} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

White has some initiative on the kingside, but how to make further progress?

22 \textit{\underline{x}d6}!

Supported by a tactical variation White seizes the sixth rank and prepares \textit{\underline{w}d1} with complete control of the open file. 22...\textit{\underline{c}4}

On 22...\textit{\underline{w}xd6} Ivkov had prepared 23 \textit{\underline{h}5!} \textit{\underline{e}6} 24 \textit{\underline{g}5!} and mate is inevitable. Also after 22...\textit{\underline{e}6} 23 \textit{\underline{e}d1} he maintains the pressure, since 23...\textit{\underline{d}4}?! runs into 24 \textit{\underline{g}5!} \textit{f6} 25 \textit{\underline{e}1xd4}, intending 25...\textit{\underline{x}d4} 26 \textit{\underline{w}e6}.

23 \textit{\underline{e}d1} \textit{\underline{x}c5}?

A logical follow-up to the previous move, but now White again takes advantage of his tactical resources on the kingside. 23...\textit{f6} first was preferable.

24 \textit{\underline{x}e5}! \textit{\underline{e}6}

Or 24...\textit{\underline{w}xe5} 25 \textit{\underline{d}1d5} \textit{\underline{w}e7} 26 \textit{\underline{x}c5}!, winning a pawn, since 26...\textit{\underline{w}xd6} runs into 27 \textit{\underline{h}5!} \textit{\underline{e}6} 28 \textit{\underline{f}6+} with mate.

25 \textit{\underline{e}6} \textit{\underline{c}7} 26 \textit{\underline{e}5}

White is a clear pawn up, and the rest is easy.

26...\textit{\underline{d}7} 27 \textit{\underline{d}1d5} \textit{\underline{d}3} 28 \textit{\underline{x}d7}! \textit{\underline{x}d7} 29 \textit{\underline{x}d7} \textit{\underline{x}d7} 30 \textit{\underline{e}4} \textit{\underline{e}6} 31 \textit{\underline{f}6+}

In view of the imminent mate, Black resigned.

\textbf{Example 233}

\textbf{A.Beliavsky-Y.Razuvaev}

Frunze 1979

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textit{\underline{w}d4} & \textit{\underline{w}f6} & \textit{\underline{a}b5} \\
\hline
\textit{\underline{w}d4} & \textit{\underline{w}f6} & \textit{\underline{a}b5} \\
\hline
\textit{\underline{w}d4} & \textit{\underline{w}f6} & \textit{\underline{a}b5} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

In a typical position from the Spanish White is basically aiming at a kingside at-
tack, whereas Black tries to create counterplay on the opposite flank.

17...g3

Heading for the ideal square on f5.

17...g6 18...f5!

Anyway! Based on the tactical line
18...gxh6 19...xf5 19...g6 20...h6! 21...g5 with mate to come, Beliavsky manages to improve his knight.

18...f6

19.Aa4!

Aware that after 19...gxh6? 20...xf5 the piece is regained, White improves his bishop and releases the pin along the c-file.

19...bxc3 20...h6+...g7

A vulnerable square for the king, but 20...g8? obviously failed to 21...xh7. In contrast, had White chosen the immediate 19...h6+, then 19...g8! would have been fully playable.

21...g4 22...h6+...h8 23...c1

There is no hurry to take the exchange.

23...c5 24...xe3!

Now tactical motifs appear along the a1-h8 diagonal.

24...g6 25...c2...fb8 26...d2!

The tempting 26...xe5!? allows 26...dxe5 27...xe5+...f6 28...xh6 29...c4! with some confusion, so Beliavsky first displaces the knight on a5.

26...ab7 27...xe5 28...xe5+...f6

Or 28...g6 29...f6 28...e6 30...d4...e6 31...h4 with a decisive attack.

29...xe7 30...xe7+...xf6 31...f6

With three pawns for the exchange and far more active pieces, the rest is easy.

31...g7 32...c3 33...f7 34...b4 35...c8 34...xc5 36...xc5 37...xh7

Black resigned.

Example 234

P.Popovic-J.Timman
Belgrade 1987

Here is a less dramatic case. In a Sicilian battle Black has just retreated his knight by 17...d7 in order to improve it via e5-c4. Popovic now alters the position in his favour by means of a well-known tactical trick.

18...d5!...xd2

After 18...g8? 19...xe7...xe7 20...fd1 the dark-squared bishop is sorely missed in Black's camp.

19...xd2

The point of 18...d5 is easily appreciated: after 19...exd5? 20 exd5 White regains the piece with a clear positional plus, while 19...xd5 20 exd5 e5 21 a5! also fa-
vours him – Popovic.

19...d8 20 b4!

Depriving the opponent of the bishop pair, after which it will be easier to attack his queenside.

20...f6

After 20...a5?! 21 fd1 the d6-pawn becomes exposed.

21 xc6 bxc6 22 ab1 ab8 23 b3 d5 24 fd1 c5?!

24...d4 was preferable, when White could try 25 e5!? xe5 26 f4, followed by xc6 – Popovic.

25 e3! e7

The a7-pawn must stay on the board.

26 exd5 cxd5 27 c4!

Creating a passed pawn and clearing some space for the fianchettoed bishop.

27...dxc4 28 bxc4 xb1

After 28...xa4?! 29 xb8 xb8 30 a1! the rook reaches the seventh rank.

29 xb1

With the plan of a5-a6, b7 and b5. White is clearly better.

White enjoys the bishop pair, but Black’s position appears to be solid. How can the former exploit his control of the b-file?

27 c5!

Based on the fact that 27...xc5?? fails to 28 b8+, Karpov manages to undermine the enemy pawn chain and get rid of his only weak pawn.

27...dxc5 28 f4!

Striking while the iron is hot.

28...h5

Romanishin creates a flight square for his king, aware that after 28...xf4? 29 e5 xd5 30 xd7 the piece can’t be recovered by 30...xc3? due to the same 31 b8+, while 30...f8 also proves unsuccessful after 31 c6, intending 31...xc3 32 b8+ e7 33 e8 mate – Karpov.

29 xe5 g4 30 xg4 hxg4 31 a1!

Having obtained a clearly superior pawn structure, White is happy to exchange pieces.

31...c2?

This loses by force. Black had to accept a difficult endgame after 31...xa1+ 32 xa1.

32 a6 xc3 33 a8+ h7 34 e6!

The rest is easy.

34...fxe6 35 dxe6 f6 36 e7 c1+ 37 f2 c2 38 e1

Black resigned.
Example 236
P.Tregubov-T.Nedev
European Club Cup, Fügen 2006

White would like to make progress with his passed pawn, but after 25 d6?! c6 it is not evident how the enemy blockade can be broken, besides which the d6-pawn might become exposed after ...f8 at some moment. Tregubov finds a cleverer solution.

25 e7!

Exploiting the tactical trick 25...xe7? 26 d6, White installs his bishop on the obstructive e7-square, where it will make a strong duo with the d-pawn after d5-d6.

30...c2 31 d3 c1+ 32 h2 e4
The only way to prevent 33 f3.

33 xex4
Even stronger was 33 g3! with the threat of 34 xg6 – Golubev.

33...c5 34 f4
Taking the e5-square from Black.

34...b5 35 b3 h7 36 d5 xdx5 37 xdx5
White later converted his extra pawn.

Example 237
A.Karpov-A.Shirov
Biel 1992
At first sight White doesn’t seem to have achieved much in this position from the Semi-Slav; e.g. 21 \( \text{Qf}5 \text{Wc5?} \) 22 \( \text{Wxc5} \text{Rxc5} \) 23 \( \text{Rac1} \text{f8,} \intended \ldots \text{c8-e6, with a solid game for Black.} \) 

21 \( \text{Rx} \text{xe5!} \)

A very concrete approach. Giving up the bishop pair hardly makes any sense in itself, but Karpov has anticipated that, in connection with a specific tactical line, it will help him to provoke chronic weaknesses on the black kingside.

21...\text{Wxe5!} \)

After 21...\text{fxe5?!} 22 \( \text{f3} \) White has a pleasant advantage thanks to the strong base on \text{e4.}

\text{22 d3! h6} \)

Unfortunately for Black, after 22...\text{g6} 23 \( \text{Qxg6! hgx6} \text{24 Wxg6+ h8} \text{25 Wh6+! g8} \) 26 \( \text{h5!} \) the double threat of 27 \text{Wg7 mate} and 27 \( \text{Qxf6+} \) cannot be parried. Thus Shirov is forced to weaken a whole complex of kingside light squares, which are immediately exploited by his opponent.

23 \( \text{g6! f8} \text{24 Qf5 c5} \)

After 24...\text{c8} 25 \( \text{h4!} \) the threat of 26 \( \text{h7+} \) followed by \( \text{Qg6+} \) is highly unpleasant; e.g. 25...\text{Wg5} 26 \( \text{h7+} \) \( \text{f7} \) 27 \( \text{f3!,} \) when the white queen enters decisively on either \text{g6} or \text{c6}. The text clears the h1-a8 diagonal for the bishop but also lets White bring a new piece into the attack.

25 \text{axb5 axb5} 26 \( \text{Aa7!} \text{Wc7} \)

Or 26...\text{Wb8} 27 \( \text{e7+} \text{h8} \) 28 \( \text{f5! Wxa7} \) 29 \( \text{g6+} \text{g8} \) 30 \( \text{e6+} with mate to come – Karpov. \)

27 \( \text{h4} \text{xd1+} \) 28 \( \text{Wxd1} \text{xa8} \)

If 28...\text{xd8}, then 29 \( \text{g4} \text{wb6} \) 30 \( \text{xb7!} \text{xb7} \) 31 \( \text{e6+} with similar consequences. \)

29 \( \text{g4!} \)

\text{29...Wc6} \)

Taking the e6-square from the white queen, but only for an instant. Obviously 29...\text{xa7?} failed to 30 \( \text{Wxe6+}, \) followed by 31 \( \text{Wxe8 mate.} \)

30 \( \text{xb7! Wxb7} \text{31 Wxe6+ h8} \text{32 e4} \)

In view of 32...\text{wa6} 33 \( \text{g6+ h7} \) 34 \( \text{e5+} \text{h8} \text{35 f7+} with Lucena’s mate to come, Black resigned.}

To finish with, let’s see a few cases where tactical resources support strategical goals of a more defensive nature.

\text{Example 238}

\text{A.Moiseenko-V.Bologan}

FIDE World Championship, Tripoli

2004

In the Hedgehog-like position above
Black has a problem with completing his development. The natural 15...\texttt{g7} drops a pawn after 16 \texttt{wxd7}, while both 15...\texttt{d6} and 15...\texttt{wc7} lead to the same result after 16 \texttt{\textbf{e}5}. Finally, the prophylactic 15...\texttt{a6} runs into 16 \texttt{\textbf{e}4}! \texttt{wc7} 17 \texttt{\textbf{d}6}, preventing ...\texttt{d7-d6}, with a firm advantage.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

15...\texttt{g5}!

Bologan has observed a minor tactical detail that will solve all his problems.

16 \texttt{e3} \texttt{b7}!

The point. With the bishop on f3 hanging in the air White has no time to capture the d7-pawn, while an exchange on b7 would leave the pawn defended by the rook.

17 \texttt{\textbf{e}4}

After 17 \texttt{\textbf{x}b7} \texttt{\textbf{x}b7} 18 \texttt{\textbf{e}4} \texttt{\textbf{e}7}, the formerly strong 19 \texttt{\textbf{d}6} proves harmless after 19...\texttt{\textbf{x}d6} 20 \texttt{\textbf{w}xd6} \texttt{\textbf{f}6}, followed by 21...\texttt{\textbf{c}8} and 22...\texttt{\textbf{bc}7} with counterplay. As for 19 \texttt{\textbf{c}3} \texttt{\textbf{c}7} 20 \texttt{\textbf{d}3}, increasing the pressure on d7, with 20...\texttt{\textbf{a}8}! Black once more uses tactical resources to mobilize his pieces: 21 \texttt{\textbf{x}d7}? now drops the knight after 21...\texttt{\textbf{x}d7} 22 \texttt{\textbf{w}xd7} \texttt{\textbf{d}8}, while other moves are met by 21...\texttt{\textbf{d}8} with a solid game.

17...\texttt{\textbf{x}e4} 18 \texttt{\textbf{x}e4}

The threat of 19 \texttt{\textbf{w}xd7} has been renewed.

18...\texttt{f5}!

Again some minor tactics help Black in his defensive labour. By vacating the f7-square for the rook with tempo he secures the d7-pawn. There was no other way of keeping the material balance; e.g. 18...\texttt{\textbf{f}6} 19 \texttt{b4} or 18...\texttt{\textbf{w}f6} 19 \texttt{\textbf{w}c2}! with double threats at h7 and d7.

19 \texttt{\textbf{f}3} \texttt{\textbf{f}7} 20 \texttt{\textbf{c}3} \texttt{\textbf{c}7} 21 \texttt{\textbf{d}3} \texttt{\textbf{d}8}

At last the d7-pawn is safe. White can't undertake much at this point, and a draw was agreed just a few moves later.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board2.png}
\end{center}

\textbf{Example 239}

\textbf{M.Tal-A.Suetin}

Sochi 1973
Black has a problem on the dark squares and his e6-pawn is weak. By exploiting some minor tactics Suetin manages to transform the position in his favour.

20...e5!

A surprising advance. Now neither 21 \( \text{hxg5??} \text{ hxh5} \) nor 21 \text{exg5} 22 \text{hxg5} \text{ hxh5}+ works for White, so he is forced to obstruct himself on the a1-h8 diagonal and the e-file.

21 fxe5 \text{ g6}

Connecting the rooks and seizing some light squares with the bishop.

22 \text{we3}

22...h6!

Preparing 23...\text{g5} in order to activate the other bishop as well. Despite his extra pawn, the position is slowly becoming unpleasant for White, whose knight is no longer particularly useful on b6.

23 \text{xf8+ xf8} 24 \text{f1 d8?!}

A good alternative was 24...\text{xf1+} 25 \text{xf1 g5} 26 \text{f3 d8} with excellent compensation for the pawn.

25 \text{c3 g5} 26 \text{e3 e7}

Getting closer to White's slightly exposed king.

27 \text{xc5 xc5} 28 \text{c4+ h7} 29 \text{f4 e7} 30 \text{b4 e6!}

As we observed in some earlier examples, such as Zvjaginsev-Polgar (p. 182), sometimes a space advantage can turn out to be more of a liability than an asset.

31 \text{f2}

Or 31 \text{c4 d3} 32 \text{c1 f8}! with a strong attack—Suetin.

31...\text{d1+} 32 \text{f1 xf1+!}

Here the game continued 32...\text{d3? 33 h4! a3 34 h5}, when White obtained counterplay and eventually even won.

33 \text{xf1 xa2}

Black finally recovers the pawn, with some advantage thanks to his active pieces and the insecure white king.

Example 240
V.Bologan-S.Rublevsky
Dortmund 2004

In this French-like structure White has just played 22 g4 with the clear intention of 23 f5, attacking the enemy king. What can Black do against this plan?

22...\text{c5}!

Exploiting the fact that 23 \text{xc5??} runs into 23...d4+, Rublevsky manages to swap the important enemy bishop on d4, whose departure will leave the e5-pawn more vulnerable and facilitate Black’s counterplay.
on the queenside. In contrast, after 22...a6?! 23 f5 cxd3 24 cxd3! ac8 25 f3 White has good attacking prospects, e.g. 25...c5 26 c6! c6 27 c4 followed by 28 h3 with tremendous pressure along the h-file.

23 g1

Leaving the vulnerable h1-a8 diagonal. 23 f5? obviously failed to 23...xd4 24 wxd4 exf5 25 gxf5 cxf5, while after 23 c3!? ec8 24 f5 a6 Black has no problems; e.g. 25 fxe6 fxe6 26 f6 bxc3 27 bxc3 cxd4 28 cxd4 c3 29 d1 c6, followed by 30...b8, with counterplay.

23...xd4 24 wxd4

24 a6!

With this move Rublevsky gets rid of the “bad” bishop and, as a bonus, softens up the c2-pawn.

25 xf2?!

Bologan approaches with his king, perhaps counting on 25...a7?! 26 xa7 xa7 27 c3. However, in the case of the queens staying on the board, the location of the king on f2 will just make the kingside more vulnerable. 25 a1 26 cxd3 26 cxd3 ac8 27 f5 seems preferable, with threat of c4-h6 and f5-f6; e.g. 27...xc5 28 xc5 xc5 29 e2 emerging into a roughly equal rook endgame.

25 xd3 26 cxd3 ac8 27 c3?

This runs into a strong counterattack. Here 27 g3 was preferable, followed by 28 f2 and 29 a1.

27...e7!

Heading for the weak square on h4.

28 g5

In view of the threat 28...h4, Bologan weakens his pawn structure. After 28 f3 h5!, both 29 h3 h4 and 29 g6 h4!, intending...h3+ and...c2+, leave the white king in quite some trouble.

28...c2!

Seizing the second rank before White manages to play 29 c1.

29 d2 c7 30 f3 ac8 31 a1 a2 32 f2

Or if 32 xf2 c1! with interesting prospects for the black queen in both directions.

32...c6! 33 d2

33 d4 permits 33...c2, while after 33 g3 a4! 34 b3 b5, preparing...c3 and...c6, Black takes over.

33 d4+ 34 f2 d5!

By attacking the a2-pawn Black prepares to meet 35 b3 by 35...c3 with a clear initiative. Rublevsky went on to win.

For the related exercises, see page 363.
Exercises

The following exercises will help you to put into practice the concepts studied earlier in the book. Each block of exercises is related to a specific theoretical section, thus it makes sense to solve them once you have finished the corresponding section.

The vast majority of these exercises is conformed by middlegame positions, with a few opening and endgame positions as a complement. Logically these examples are shorter and less detailed than the explanatory examples featured earlier in the book, yet on many occasions I have continued the examples far after the supposed finish of the solution, due to their instructive content.

In most cases I am asking for a 1st move + short plan. The latter can be anything from a general idea ("clear the b1-h7 diagonal for the bishop", "swap the defender on f6" etc), a specific plan or manœuvre ("intending ♙d2-b3-a5 with pressure on c6") to a concrete sequence of moves ("in order to meet 1...♕d5 with 2 ♙xd5 cxd5 3 ♣c1 seizing the open file"). Sometimes you will have to evaluate one or two options, and in a number of complex positions concrete variations are required, e.g. 3-4 complete moves.

Depending on the level of each exercise (they are presented in ascending order of difficulty) you will probably need between 5 and 20 minutes to find the solution. If your solution doesn't coincide with the one in the book, don't despair - the main thing is to grasp the general idea, and if you haven't, then give yourself more time for the next position. On the other hand, you might have found an even better solution, who knows!

On some occasions I have included 1st move alternatives in the solution (typically originating in suggestions from my students) that for one or another reason deserve attention. Different move orders have also been dealt with in some cases. In a few exercises the related concept is applied indirectly, e.g. preventing your opponent from making a key exchange.
Finally, you might find some exercises a little easy, in particular the first ones of each section. However, in my opinion there is nothing wrong with verifying existing knowledge, just like you review a part of your opening repertoire before a tournament game. A major aim of these exercises is indeed to improve your intuition, so as to be able to apply strategical concepts more swiftly in practice.
Exercises 1-20: The bishop

Position 1 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 2 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 3 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 4 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 5 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 6 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Mastering Chess Strategy

Position 7 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 10 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 8 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 11 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 9 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 12 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 13 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 14 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 15 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 16 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 17 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 18 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Mastering Chess Strategy

**Position 19 (Black to play)**

Indicate your first 2 moves + short plan.

**Position 20 (White to play)**

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Exercises 21-40: The knight**

**Position 21 (White to play)**

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Position 23 (White to play)**

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Position 22 (Black to play)**

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Position 24 (Black to play)**

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your first 2 moves + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Exercises 41-60: The rook**

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 43 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 44 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 45 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 46 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 47 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 48 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Exercises 61-69: The queen

Position 61 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 62 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 63 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 64 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 65 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 66 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Position 68 (Black to play)**

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Exercises 70-81: The king**

**Position 70 (Black to play)**

Indicate your 1st move + general solution for the king.

**Position 71 (Black to play)**

Indicate your 1st move + general solution for the king.
Indicate your 1st move + general solution for the king.

Indicate your 1st move + general solution for the king.

Indicate your 1st move + general solution for the king.

Indicate your 1st move + general solution for the king.
Indicate your 1st move + general solution for the king.

Black threatens 1...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g1}}+ 2 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{d2}} \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{f2}}. Which is best 1 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{f3}} or 1 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{e3}} - ? (5-6 moves analysis)

Indicate your 1st move + general solution for the king.

Black wants to play 1...\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{c5}}, preparing ...\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{d5}}-\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{d4}}. Should he fear 2 \textcolor{blue}{\texttt{h3}} - ? (5-6 moves analysis)
Exercises 82-90: The bishop pair

Position 82 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 83 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 84 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 85 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 86 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 87 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 89 (Black to play)

White has quite some pressure for the pawn. Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Exercises 91-96: Exchanges – material advantage

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Exercises 97-104: Exchanges – positional advantage

Position 97 (White to play)

Evaluate 1 \textit{g3. (general considerations)}

Position 98 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 99 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 100 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 101 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 102 (White to play)

How do you continue? (4-5 moves)
Position 99 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 100 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 101 (Black to play)

Evaluate the options 1...\text{xf3} 2 \text{xf3} \text{e5} and 1...\text{c8} 2 \text{c1} \text{b8}. (general considerations)

Position 102 (Black to play)

Evaluate the options 1...0-0-0 and 1...\text{xd4}. (general considerations)

Position 103 (Black to play)

Evaluate 1...\text{xe5}. (2-3 moves)

Position 104 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Exercises 105-114: Exchanges – key pieces

Position 105 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 108 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 106 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 109 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 107 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 110 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 111 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 112 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 113 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 114 (White to play)

Evaluate the options 1 əd3 and 1 əd2. (general considerations)
Exercises 115-126: Exchanges – attack

Position 115 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 116 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 117 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 118 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 119 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 120 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Evaluate the options 1 \textit{d}d2 and 1 \textit{d}d1.
\textit{(general considerations)}

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)
Exercises 127-136: Exchanges – defence

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your first 2 moves + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 133 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 134 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 135 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 136 (Black to play)

Evaluate the options 1...\textit{Q}xf3+ and 1...\textit{Q}d6. (3-4 moves)
Exercises 137-148: Exchanges – activity

Position 137 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 140 (White to play)

Evaluate 1 c5. (general considerations)

Position 138 (White to play)

Evaluate 1 xxd4. (general considerations)

Position 141 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 139 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 142 (White to play)

Evaluate 1 c2 and 1 e1. (generally)
Position 143 (Black to play)

Evaluate the options 1...d5 and 1...e4.

Position 144 (White to play)

Evaluate 1...f2. (general considerations)

Position 145 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 146 (Black to play)

Evaluate 1...d5. (general considerations)

Position 147 (White to play)

Black just played ...b8-e8. Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 148 (White to play)

Evaluate 1...f4. (general considerations)
Exercises 149-154: Series of exchanges

Position 149 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 152 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 150 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 153 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 151 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 154 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Exercises 155-162: Dynamic exchanges

Position 155 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 156 (Black to play)

Evaluate 1...e6. (general considerations)

Position 157 (Black to play)

Indicate your first 2 moves + short plan.

Position 158 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 159 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 160 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your first 2 moves + short plan.

Exercises 163-174: Gaining space

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 173 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 174 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Exercises 175-192: Creating weaknesses

Position 175 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 177 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 176 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 178 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 191 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 192 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Exercises 193-208: Passed pawns

Position 193 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 195 (White to play)

How do you continue? (4-5 moves)

Position 194 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 196 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)
Position 197 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 200 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 198 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 201 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 199 (White to play)

How do you continue? (5-6 moves)

Position 202 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 203 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 204 (White to play)

How do you continue? (4-5 moves)

Position 205 (Black to play)

Evaluate 1...b5. (general considerations)

Position 206 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 207 (Black to play)

White just played 1 d6 attacking c7 and a8. Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 208 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)
Exercises 209-218: Pawn majorities

Position 209 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 210 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 211 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 212 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 213 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 214 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)
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**Position 215 (Black to play)**  
![Chessboard](image1)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Position 217 (White to play)**  
![Chessboard](image2)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

**Position 216 (White to play)**  
![Chessboard](image3)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

**Position 218 (Black to play)**  
![Chessboard](image4)

Evaluate 1...\(\text{h}7\) and 1...\(\text{f}6\). (3-4 moves)

**Exercises 219-228: Pawn chains**

**Position 219 (Black to play)**  
![Chessboard](image5)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

**Position 220 (White to play)**  
![Chessboard](image6)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Exercises 229-246: Dynamics

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 232 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)
Position 233 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 234 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 235 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 236 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves).

Position 237 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 238 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)
Position 239 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 240 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 241 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 242 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 243 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 244 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Black has sac'd a pawn. How do you neutralize his initiative? (1st move + short plan)

Exercises 247-266: Restriction
Position 251 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 252 (Black to play)

Indicate your first 2 moves + short plan.

Position 253 (Black to play)

Evaluate 1...g4. (2-3 moves)

Position 254 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 255 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 256 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 257 (White to play)

Indicate your first 2 moves + short plan.

Position 260 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 258 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 261 (Black to play)

White has just played h1-d1. Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 259 (White to play)

Indicate your first 2 moves + short plan.

Position 262 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 264 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Black’s last move was ...h7-h6. Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 266 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Exercises 267-286: Prophylaxis

Position 267 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 268 (Black to play)

White has just played ♙c3-d1. Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 269 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 270 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 271 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 272 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 273 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 276 (Black to play)

White has just played \( c1-c2 \). Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 274 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 277 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 275 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 278 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 279 (White to play)

Black’s last move was ...g6-g5. Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 280 (Black to play)

Identify White’s intentions and take prophylactic measures. (2-3 moves)

Position 281 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 282 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 283 (White to play)

Black has just played ...a7-a6. Look for the most flexible reply. (2-3 moves)

Position 284 (Black to play)

White has just played a3-g3. Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Exercises 287-306: Provocation

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

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Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Exercises 307-314: Weak squares

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 309 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 310 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 311 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 312 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 313 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 314 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Exercises 315-324: Weak pawns

Position 315 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 316 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 317 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 319 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 320 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Evaluate 1 f4. (general considerations)
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Exercises 325-334: Doubled pawns

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Evaluate 1...<w.e6. (3-4 moves)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Exercises 335-350: Blockade

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Evaluate the options 1...c5 and 1...cxd5. (general considerations)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Position 345 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 346 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 347 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 348 (Black to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 349 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.

Position 350 (White to play)

Indicate your 1st move + short plan.
Exercises 351-366: The initiative

Position 351 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 352 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 353 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 354 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 355 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 356 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)
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Position 357 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 358 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 359 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 360 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 361 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Position 362 (White to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)
Position 363 (White to play)

Position 364 (Black to play)

Position 365 (White to play)

Position 366 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

How do you continue? (3-4 moves)

Exercises 367-382: The link between tactics and strategy

Position 367 (Black to play)

Position 368 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)
Position 369 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 370 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 371 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 372 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 373 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 374 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)
Position 375 (White to play)

Evaluate the options 1. \textit{f}4 and 1. \textit{g}5. (2-3 moves)

Position 378 (White to play)

Evaluate the options 1. g4 and 1. \textit{w}e3. (3-4 moves)

Position 376 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 379 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 377 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 380 (White to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)
Position 381 (Black to play)

How do you continue? (2-3 moves)

Position 382 (Black to play)

White has just played the aggressive \( \mathbb{N}d1-d3 \), overlooking a tactical detail. Can you spot it? (3-4 moves).
Solutions

Position 1
St. Nikolic-B. Ivkov
Sarajevo 1967

1...\texttt{\textvisiblespace}e8!

Heading for g6 to seize the b1-h7 diagonal.
2 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}g4 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}b6+ 3 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}h1 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}g6 4 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}b1 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c6 5 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}b5 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c8 6 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}a2 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}e4

The bishop is installed on a protected square. Black has no problems.

Position 2
J. Timman-V. Ilkonnikov
Dieren 2009

1 c4!

Clearing the long diagonal for the bishop, where there is no black counterpart.
1...\texttt{\textvisiblespace}c7 2 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c2 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}e7 3 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}e4!

In order to soften up Black’s kingside.
3...\texttt{\textvisiblespace}h6 4 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}b2 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}e8 5 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c1!

Heading for b3 to harass the a5-bishop.
5...\texttt{\textvisiblespace}d7 6 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}h7+ \texttt{\textvisiblespace}h8 7 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}f5 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c7 8 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}b3

White has a clear advantage.

Position 3
E. Scholl-J. Timman
Dutch Championship,
Leeuwarden 1974

1...\texttt{\textvisiblespace}f8!

Black prepares 2...\texttt{\textvisiblespace}h6 to improve the passive bishop.
2 c3!

The game continued 2 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c1? \texttt{\textvisiblespace}h6 3 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}d3 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c3 4 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}d2 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}d2! and White resigned.
2...\texttt{\textvisiblespace}h6

After 2...\texttt{\textvisiblespace}xc3 3 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c2, followed by \texttt{\textvisiblespace}xc3, White has fewer problems.
3 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}c2 a4!

Intending 4 bxa4 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}a8. Black keeps the initiative.

Position 4
J. Hellsten-M. Flores Rios
Santiago 2007

1 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}f2!

Preparing 2 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}d4 in order to seize the long diagonal. Also interesting is 1 \texttt{\textvisiblespace}a3!,
attacking the d6-pawn.
1...c3 2 b2!
The immediate 2 d4?? failed to 2...wxd4! 3 wxd4 e2+, while 2 b3?! b5 isn’t convincing either.
2...a4?!
Preferable was 2...b5 3 a4 a3 4 b6 xc4 5 xc4 xc4 6 xc4 b5, reducing the material.
3 d4 f8 4 d3!
Planning to attack on the kingside.
4...c7 5 b3 ac8 6 xc7 xc7 7 e5!
White has a clear initiative.

Position 5
J.Hellsten-B.Sahl
Arlöv 1995

1 a3!
With the strong plan of b3-b4 and b3(+) to seize the a2-g8 diagonal.
1...g6
This leads to new weaknesses, but after 1...wd7 2 wf3?!, followed by 3 b4, Black is also under pressure.
2 wf3 h5 3 b4 b6 4 b3+ g7 5 we2 d7
6 wc4
Not bad, but 6 wd2! was even stronger.
6...fw8
Or 6...we8 7 we6! wxe6 8 xe6, and 9 c8.
7 we6 db8 8 g3 bh7 9 g2
Enabling a future f2-f4, whereas Black is completely tied up. There followed 9...a6 10 wd7+ wg7 11 wc8 axb4 12 axb4 a7 13 a4 b8 14 a6 a6 15 g8+! wxg8 16 wb7+ wg7 17 wa6 with a quick win.

Position 6
L.Oll-B.Gelfand
Polanica Zdroj 1998

1...f5!
Softening up the h1-a8 diagonal for the bishop. Obviously 1...d5? 2 e5 is less constructive.
2 a3 e3 wd7 3 d4 f6
Also interesting is 3...f6!?, stepping up the pressure on e4; for example, 4 wc2 h8 5 wb3! fxe4! 6 dxe6 exd3 7 xf8 wh3! 8 d5 wg4! 9 h3 wf5 and Black wins – Gelfand.
4 de2 g8 5 ad1 g6 6 ad4 e5
Even stronger was 6...xf4! 7 xf4 (or 7 xf6 xe2) 7...e5 8 xe5 dxe5 with a clear edge.
7 e3 g7 8 fe5 dxe5 9 h6
At this point the simplest was 9...d8!, attacking the d3-pawn, with a clear advantage after 10 g5 c8 – Gelfand.

Position 7
T.V.Petrosian-V.Smyslov
USSR Championship, Moscow 1949

1...d5!
Sacrificing a pawn to clear the a1-h8 diagonal for the bishop.
2 xd5
Preferable was 2 exd5 e4 3 xe4 xb2 4 f3 xa3 5 zd3 – Smyslov, although Black’s bishop pair and outside passed pawn should tell in the end.
2...xd5 3 exd5 xc2 4 b3 e4!
The passed pawn manages to advance all the way to e3.
5 g4 e3 6 g2 d2! 7 xd2 exd2 8 d1 xd5
With a clear advantage.

Position 8
S.Brynell-T.Ernst
Swedish Championship,
Gothenburg 2004

1...d3!
Swapping off the knight on e5 in order to clear the long diagonal towards the black king.

1...\(\text{Qxd3} \ 2 \text{Qxd3 b4}\)

Preventing 3 \(\text{Qxc3}\) and creating the threat of 3...c4, which White parries with his next move.

3 \(\text{Qxc1} \text{Qb6} \ 4 \text{Qe3!}\)

Heading for h6 and preparing to meet 4...c4 by 5 \(\text{Qd4!}\).

4...\(\text{Qe8} \ 5 \text{Qc2} \text{Qb7}\?\)

The last chance was 5...e5, when 6 dxe6 \(\text{Qxe6} \ 7 \text{Qc1}\), intending \(\text{Qd5}\), leaves White clearly better.

6 \(\text{Qh6} \text{Qd8} \ 7 \text{Qce2}\)

Preparing \(\text{Qe4}\) and \(\text{Qxg6}\), a plan impossible to stop.

7...\(\text{Qc7}\)

If 7...\(\text{Qf5}\), then 8 g4 \(\text{Qd3} \ 9 \text{Qe3} \text{c4}\) 10 bx\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{Qxc4}\) 11 \(\text{Qe4!}\) e5 12 dxe6 \(\text{Qxe6}\) 13 \(\text{Qxg6!}\) and wins.

8 \(\text{Qe4!}\) e5

8...\(\text{Qf5}\) 9 \(\text{Qxf5}\) gxf5 10 \(\text{Qe6!}\), heading for g6.

9 dxe6 \(\text{Qxe6}\) 10 \(\text{Qxg6!}\) \(\text{Qc8}\) 11 \(\text{Qxf7+}\) \(\text{Qxf7}\)

12 \(\text{Qe4} \text{Qc7}\) 13 \(\text{Qxe8+}\)

In view of the imminent mate, Black resigned.

Position 9

D. Janowski-J. R. Capablanca
New York 1916

1...b4!

Sacrificing a pawn in order to enter with the bishop on a4 and c2. Another sensible idea is 1...\(\text{Qf8!?}\), preparing 3...\(\text{Qe8-h5}\).

2 \(\text{axb4}\)

Or 2 \(\text{Qxb4} \text{Qa4!}\) (avoiding 2...\(\text{Qxb4}\) 3 \(\text{axb4} \text{Qa4}\) 4 \(\text{Qa1}\) 3 \(\text{Qxe7} \text{Qxe7}\) 4 \(\text{Qbc1} \text{Qb8}\) with strong pressure.

2...\(\text{Qa4} \ 3 \text{Qa1}\)

On 3 \(\text{Qc1}\) Black might consider

3...\(\text{Qxf4+!}\) 4 \(\text{Qxf4} \text{Qg5+}\), recovering the material with a superior position.

3...\(\text{Qc2} \ 4 \text{Qg3} \text{Qe4+} \ 5 \text{Qf2 h5!} \ 6 \text{a7}\)

The only way to parry the threat of 6...h4.

6...\(\text{Qxg2} \ 7 \text{Qxg2} \text{h4} \ 8 \text{Qxh4} \text{Qxg2+} \ 9 \text{Qf3} \text{Qh2} \ 10 \text{Qxe7} \text{Qh3+} \ 11 \text{Qf2} \text{Qb3}\)

Black soon won.

Position 10

S. Bjarnason-J. Hellsten
Malmö 1991

1 a4!

White prepares 2 \(\text{Qa3}\) to activate the bishop.

1...\(\text{Qc7?!}\)

1...\(\text{Qxd5} \ 2 \text{axb5} \text{Qe6}\) 3 \(\text{Qa3} \text{Qe8}\) was preferable, although White is better anyway thanks to his strong bishop pair.

2 \(\text{Qa3} \text{Qxb1}\) 3 \(\text{Qxb1} \text{Qe8}\) 4 \(\text{Qe3!}\)

Now the knight becomes awkward on c7.

4...\(\text{Qa8} \ 5 \text{Qb5} \text{Qc7}\) 6 \(\text{Qd5} \text{Qxd5}\) 7 \(\text{Qxd5}\)

Intending d5-d6 with a crushing advantage.

Position 11

Y. Neishtadt-A. Kotov
Leningrad 1956

1...d5!

To clear the long diagonal for the bishop.

2 \(\text{exd5?!}\)

Preferable was 2 \(\text{Qc5!}\) dxe4 3 \(\text{Qe2}\) with unclear play.

2...\(\text{e4} \ 3 \text{Qe2} \text{Qexd5} \ 4 \text{Qd1}\)

On 4 \(\text{Qa1}\) there follows 4...\(\text{Qxc3} \ 5 \text{Qxc3}\) \(\text{Qd5}\) and Black wins.

4...\(\text{Qd7}\)

With ideas like \(\text{Qe5-d3}\) and \(\text{Qd7-b6-a4}\), Black enjoys excellent attacking prospects.
Position 12
A.Beliavsky-O.Romanishin
USSR Championship, Tbilisi 1978

1  f1

The bishop is transferred to the long diagonal where it will attack Black’s queenside. 1  e2!? followed by  f3 is similar, whereas 1  b2  c8 2  c1  d8 is less incisive.

1...c8 2  g2  b4

Both 2...xe3?! 4 fxe3  xc3 4  xb7 and 2...c7 3  a4  b4 4  d4!, intending 4...d6? 5  xd6!  xd6 6  a3+, favour White.

3  c2  c7 4  f1  c8 5  b2 b5?!

Removing the pawn from the bishop’s sight, but now the queenside is weakened.

6 a4! bxa4 7  a4 a5 8  a3!

Fighting for the a5-pawn.

8...  a3 9  a3  c5 10  d4  e4 11  a5

White later converted his extra pawn into victory.

Position 13
S.Brynell-J.Hellsten
Malmö 1998

1...f4!

Sacrificing a pawn to enter with the bishop along the b1-h7 diagonal. After 1...c7 2  d3  c3 3  b4  b6 4  b1, followed by  d2, White has more chances of survival.

2  xf4  f5 3 e6+

Or 3  e1  e4, intending 4...g5, as well as  e6-g4.

3...a8 4  f7  e4 5  e1

After 5  g1  hf8! 6  h2  c6 7  e5 g5 Black also enjoys a strong initiative.

5...g5 6 hxg5 hxg5 7  xe4 dx e4

The immediate 7...h6!? was strong as well.

8  xg5  h6 9  xe4  h3+ 10  f3  h5+ 11  g4  xf7

Thanks to the exposed enemy king Black is clearly better.

Position 14
G.Giorгадзе-K.Lerner
Lvov 1990

1  d2!

White prepares  e1-g3 in order to improve the bishop and reinforce the kingside defence.

1...b8

After 1...h5 2  e1 h4 (or 2...hxg4 3  g3!  g7 4 fxg4, followed by  f2) 3  g2, intending f3-f4, White is clearly better – Giorгадze. Obviously closing the kingside is against Black’s wishes.

2  e1  a8 3  b5?!

Increasing the pressure towards the enemy queenside. Instead, the game continued 3  b2  c4 4  c2  h5 5  a4 hxg4 6  g3  e8 with unclear play, though the simple 3  g3!? also deserves attention.

3...e6 4 a4 a6 5 g3!

Now that 5...axb5? 6 axb5+  a7 fails to 7  e4, followed by  f1, White has seized the initiative.

Position 15
G.Sigurjónsson-L.Stein
Reykjavik 1972

1...d5!

With the mission of clearing the long diagonal for the bishop.

2 e5 d4!

Of course. Any other move permits 2  d4 virtually burying the bishop on b7.

3  xd4

Both 3 exf6  xf6 and 3  xd4  xf3 4 exf6  xf6 let Black recover the material.
with a clear edge.

3...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{g}4} 4 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{g}1} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{h}2}!

A tactical blow, based on a mating motif on the h-file.

5 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{f}1}

If 5 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{x}h2} then 5...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{w}xd4}, while 5 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{x}h2} permits 5...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{x}b4}!, threatening mate on h4.

5...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{g}4} 6 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}4} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{x}b4}! 7 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{g}5}

White has to prevent the mate.

7...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}5}! 8 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{g}f3} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{x}b3} 9 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{x}b3} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}5}

With a sound extra pawn, Black is winning.

\textbf{Position 16}

\textbf{L.Stein-T.V.Petrosian}

USSR Championship, Moscow 1961

1 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{a}4!}

Sacrificing a pawn to seize the a3-f8 diagonal with the bishop. Other moves, such as 1 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{a}1}?, permit the restrictive 1...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{a}4}!.

1...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{a}4}

Or 1...0-0 2 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{a}1} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}8} 3 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{a}3} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}8} 4 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}6} with a clear plus.

2 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{a}1} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{b}5} 3 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{a}3} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}7} 4 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{f}2}! \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{b}7} 5 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{a}1} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}8}

Black has managed to cover the f7-pawn, but White finds a way to step up the pressure.

6 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}1}!

With ideas like \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{h}5}, \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{b}1}-b4 and \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}6} followed by \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{g}4}.

6...\textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{h}6} 7 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{c}1}! \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{h}7} 8 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}6}!

In view of the decisive 8...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{f}xe6} 9 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{g}4}, Black resigned.

\textbf{Position 17}

\textbf{Y.Vilner-P.Romanovsky}

USSR Championship, Moscow 1924

1...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}6}!

Preparing the strong manoeuvre ...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{f}8}-c5-d4.

2 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}3} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{f}8} 3 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{hd}1}

After 3 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}3} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}7} 4 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{hd}1} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{f}8}!, and ...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{c}5}-d4, Black also accomplishes his plan.

3...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{c}5} 4 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}2} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}4} 5 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{b}1} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{c}5}

Thanks to his tremendous bishop Black is clearly better. Romanovsky later opened a new front by ...\textcolor{red}{\textf{7}}-f6.

\textbf{Position 18}

\textbf{V.Salov-M.Gurevich}

Reggio Emilia 1991/92

1 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{b}4}!

Preparing \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{b}4-b5} to soften up the long diagonal for the bishop on g2.

1...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xc}4}?! 1...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}4} was preferable, although after 2 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xe}4} \textcolor{red}{\textf{xe}4} 3 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xe}6} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{w}xe6} 4 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{w}c}2 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{fe}8} 5 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}3} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{c}7} 6 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{fd}1} White is better thanks to his bishop pair.

2 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{b}5} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xb}5} 3 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}xb5}

After 3 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xb}7} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{b}4}! Black gets some counterplay.

3...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}8} 4 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{a}3}

One more piece into play. 4 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xd}6} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}6} 5 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{a}3} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}8}! is less clear.

4...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}5} 5 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}6}!

Again White prefers activity over material.

5...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}5} 6 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xc}4} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xc}4} 7 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{c}2} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{c}5}

Now the game continued 8 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xc}5}? \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xc}5} 9 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{b}5} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{d}6} and White lost a significant part of his advantage. Much stronger was 8 \textcolor{blue}{\textgreek{a}4}!, e.g. 8...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{b}6} 9 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xc}5} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xc}5} 10 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xc}4} with a huge advantage – Salov.

\textbf{Position 19}

\textbf{M.Carlson-A.Beliavsky}

Amsterdam 2006

1...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xd}5}! 2 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{xd}5}

After 2 \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{exd}5} \textcolor{red}{\textgreek{e}4}! the bishop on g7 wakes up and a passed pawn appears on the e-file.
2...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f6}}}!

Intending ...\texttt{\texttt{d8}}, \texttt{c7-c6} and ...\texttt{b6(+) in order to activate the bishop.

3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g3}}}}

Or 3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g5}}} \texttt{\texttt{d8}}! 4 \texttt{\texttt{xf6}}+ \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{xf6}}}} 5 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g3}}} \texttt{c6}, when the g1-a7 diagonal becomes useful for the queen.

3\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{c6}}} 4 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{b3}}} \texttt{\texttt{d8}}! 5 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d3}}}

Obviously the restrictive 5 \texttt{\texttt{e3}} failed to 5...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}

5...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{b6}}}+ 6 \texttt{\texttt{h1}}}

6 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e3}}} straight away was preferable.

6...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g4}}}! 7 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e3}}}}

If 7 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{xd6}}}, then 7...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f2}}} 8 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g1}}} \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}g2+! with mate.

7...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}} 8 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{xe3}}} \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f4}}}}

With the double idea of 9...\texttt{\texttt{x}e4} and 9...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e}}f8}}. Black is clearly better Beliavsky.

\textbf{Position 20}
\textbf{A. Beliavsky-J. Lautier}
Linares 1994

1 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f1}}}

Redirecting the passive bishop to the h3-c8 diagonal where it will complicate Black’s long castling. 1 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{xf6}}}?! \texttt{\texttt{x}}f6 2 \texttt{\texttt{f1}} is less exact due to 2...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d4}}}, intending 3 \texttt{\texttt{h3}} \texttt{f5}.

1...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d4}}}}

On 1...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}g3??}} there follows 2 \texttt{h8}+ \texttt{f8} 3 \texttt{h3} \texttt{d6} 4 \texttt{e1} \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g7}}} 5 \texttt{f4}, destroying the black defence, while after 1...0-0-0?! 2 \texttt{xf6} \texttt{gxf6} 3 \texttt{h3} \texttt{h8} 4 \texttt{d1}! \texttt{\texttt{x}}d5 5 \texttt{\texttt{g4}} the pin will soon take its toll.

2 \texttt{f4!}

The game saw 2 \texttt{h8}+?! \texttt{f8} 3 \texttt{h3} \texttt{d6} 4 \texttt{f4} \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}d5} and Black eventually saved a draw.

2...\texttt{\texttt{f3}}

After 2...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d8}}} 3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e}}} 4 \texttt{d3}+, intending 5 \texttt{\texttt{e4}}, White also enjoys a strong initiative.

3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}2 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g5}}} 4 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}g5 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g8}}} 5 \texttt{\texttt{h8} \texttt{\texttt{f8}}}

Not 5...0-0-0? 6 \texttt{\texttt{h3}} and wins.

6 \texttt{\texttt{h3}}! \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d7}}} 7 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f3}}}}}

Intending \texttt{\texttt{h5-h7}}, as well as \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g4}}} followed by \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f6}}}. White has an overwhelming initiative.

\textbf{Position 21}
\textbf{P. Benko-M. Najdorf}
Los Angeles 1963

1 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d1!}}}

Preparing \texttt{\texttt{d1-e3-f5}}.

1...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g6}}} 2 \texttt{\texttt{d1}}\texttt{h8}}

Other moves, such as 2...\texttt{\texttt{b5}}, can be answered in the same way, while 2...\texttt{\texttt{f4}} 3 \texttt{h7} followed by \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e3-f5}} doesn’t help Black either.

3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e3}}} \texttt{\texttt{c7}}

If 3...\texttt{\texttt{e7}} covering \texttt{f5}, then 4 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{h5}}} \texttt{\texttt{f6}} 5 \texttt{\texttt{d1}} followed by \texttt{\texttt{d1-h3}}.

4 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{f5}}} \texttt{\texttt{f8}} 5 \texttt{\texttt{d1}}

Another way to victory was 5 \texttt{\texttt{h7}} 6 \texttt{\texttt{xg7}}+ \texttt{\texttt{xg7}} 7 \texttt{\texttt{h6+ \texttt{\texttt{h8}}} 8 \texttt{\texttt{f7+ etc.}}}

5...\texttt{\texttt{f6}} 6 \texttt{f4!}

A decisive sacrifice.

6...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e}}} 7 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{h5}}} \texttt{\texttt{e5}} 8 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{h7+}}}

In view of 8...\texttt{\texttt{f7}} 9 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}g7+ \texttt{\texttt{e8}} 10 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}f8+! \texttt{\texttt{xf8}} 11 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{h8+}}, Black resigned.}

\textbf{Position 22}
\textbf{I. Morovic Fernandez-I. Rogers}
Spanish Team Championship 1994

1...\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d7}}}!

Intending 2...\texttt{e5} followed by 2...\texttt{d3(+) or ...\texttt{f3(+)}. 1...\texttt{\texttt{c4}! with the same idea is less precise due to 2 \texttt{\texttt{f6+}}!.

2 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g3 \texttt{d6}}}}

Before continuing his plan Black makes a few prophylactic moves in order to neutralize White’s \texttt{\texttt{f6+} idea.

3 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{g2}}} \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{h8}}} 4 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e2}}}

Or 4 \texttt{\texttt{g3 \texttt{xg3}}, followed by ...\texttt{\texttt{e5}}.

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4...e5 5 d4 b4

Thus Black avoids a fork on f5 before completing the knight manoeuvre.

6 a3 axc3+ 7 bxc3 d3+ 8 f1 wc5

With better placed pieces and a strong passed pawn, Black has a clear advantage.

Position 23

B.Spassky-J.H.Donner
Santa Monica 1966

1 g5!

By attacking the h7-pawn, the knight gets to d6 with tempo.

1...h6

On 1...f8 or 1...g6 there follows the same thing.

2 e4 wc7

After 2...ex5? 3 d6 White wins a piece.

3 d6 d8 4 d1 wb6 5 hd4

Thanks to his powerful knight on d6 White is clearly better. The game concluded 5...e8f 6 wh1 wc5 7 f4 db6 8 e4 wa3 9 wg4! (initiating a final attack) 9...bxc4 10 ef6+ wh8 11 d8 wc7 12 wg6! gx6f 13 wxf6+ and Black resigned in view of 13...g8 14xf8+ xf8 15 d8.

5 cxd5 a5! 6 f4 f6 7 f5?

Burying the bishop. 7 h4 intending h3 was preferable.

7...a4 8 f1 axb3 9 axb3 wa3 10 bb1 a8

Intending wb4 and a2 with a clear advantage thanks to the powerful knight on d4.

Position 25

A.Raetsky-M.Gurevich
Fourmies 1997

1...f8!

Heading for g6-f4(h4) in order to exploit White’s kingside weaknesses.

2 f3

Or 2 e4 g6 3 we3 f4+ 4 wh2 f5! with a strong initiative – Gurevich.

2...g6 3 f1 f5!

Clearing the f-file for an attack and preventing d2-e4. Less clear is 3...g5 4 e4! or 3...f4 4 cc3 xd4 5 xb7 xe8 6 ec3 – Gurevich.

4 b3

Obviously, 4 gxf5 invites 4...f8.

4...f8 5 cc2 f4 6 c1 xh3+ 7 xh3 xh3

Black later realized his extra pawn.

Position 26

M.Matilak-M.Marin
Olorheiu Secuiesc 1995

1 e7!

With the strong plan ...g8-f6-e4. Less accurate is 1...b8?! intending d7-f6-e4 due to 2 e3! followed by wc2, with pressure against f5.

2 e2

Preparing a similar plan with c5-d3-e5. If instead 2 e3 interfering with the enemy manoeuvre, then Black could adjust his plans by 2...b6!? preparing ...c7-c5.
2...c5 3 dxc5 f6 4 d3 e4 5 w3 h5!
    Preparing a kingside attack.
6 e5 wh6 7 d3 e6 8 f1 c5!
    Now that the white king is approaching
    the centre, Black amplifies his attack with
    a definite initiative. At this point 8 dxc5
    is well met by 8...xex5 9 fxe5 xex3 10
    xex3 xg3#+, intending 11 xg3 f4.

Position 27
V.Korchnoi-J.Piket
Match (game 3), Nijmegen 1993

1 e1!
    Redirecting the knight to the blockading
    square d3, and clearing the long diagonal
    for the bishop. 1 h3 d5 is less convincing.
1...dxe7 2 d3 b6
    Parrying the threat of 3 c5.
3 h3 wb3
    Or 3...wd5 4 fc1 and Black runs out of
    sensible moves.
4 fc1 wd5 5 xc7
    Not 5 xf5? e5!, but 5 g2 we6 6 f3
    again left Black in a kind of zugzwang –
    Piket.
5...g5?
    The last chance was 5...xc7 6 xc7 e7.
    Now White wins a pawn.
6 f4! xc7 7 xc7 d8 8 xa7
    With a decisive advantage.

Position 28
J.Nogueiras Santiago-M.Sisniega
Novi Sad Olympiad 1990

1...e4!
    Creating a protected square on f3 that
    can be exploited by the knight after the
    swap of bishops. 1...xd6? is less convincing
    due to 2 xc6 xc6 3 xc5.
2 xg7 xg7 3 wd2
    White has to take care of his d6-pawn.
3...e5!
    Initiating favourable complications.
4 c5 xc6 5 xc6 xxd2 6 xxd2 xxd2 7
    xa6 f3+
    In this desperate position, White re-
    signed. There could follow 8 f1 xh2+ 9
    e1 g2, intending ...xg4 and the march of
    the h-pawn.

Position 29
R.J.Fischer-O.Gadia
Mar del Plata 1960

1 xf6! xf6 2 d5!
    Swapping the defenders of the d5-
    square in order to install the knight there.
    Less convincing is 2 d5?! xd5 3 xd5
    ac8 followed by ...f6-g5.
2...ac8 3 xc6 xc6 4 ad1 xc8?!
    A better way of exploiting the c-file was
    4...wc5, intending 5 d5?! xc2. White
    should prefer 5 wg3 h8 6 xd2!, followed by
    7 d5, keeping all his positional assets.
5 d5! wd8 6 e3
    The knight dominates the whole board
    and Black is left without counterplay.
6...e7 7 a1!
    Preparing a2-a4 to soften up the black
    queenside. Also interesting was 7 f6? xf6
    8 xf6+ gxf6 9 wh3!, followed by ad3-g3
    with a strong attack.
7...f6 8 a4 b8?
    This loses outright, but Black had a hard
    time anyway.
9 xe7+!
    In view of 9...xe7 10 xd5+, Black re-
    signed.

Position 30
M.O’Cinneide-A.Baburin
Dublin 1995

1...d7!
Heading for the weak square on d3.

2 e4

If 2 f4?! preventing Black’s plan, then after 2...d6! the knight finds an excellent destiny on e4. Also after 2 b4 a6c8 White is under some slight pressure.

2...e5 3 c2 c4!

Fixing d3 as a protected square and facilitating the future advance of the queenside pawn majority.

4 e3 b5 5 f6d1 a6 6 f4 d3 7 c3 cac8 8 c4

Of course 8 xg7? fails to 8...c5+.

8...f6 9 Rad1 e6

Thanks to his strong knight Black is better.

Position 31

E.Bareev-V.Salov

Linares 1992

1 d2!

Redirecting the knight to a5 where it will eye the c6-pawn and help White to fight for the open a-file.

1...g6 2 f3 d8 3 a5 c7 4 a3! a6 5 ad1 ca8 6 c1!

In order to open a second front with h2-h4.

6...f6 7 f3 d7 8 g2 e5

If 8...f5 then 9 h4, whereas other moves permit the central thrust 9 e4.

9 dx e5 dxe5

Or 9...fxe5 10 h4 d6 11 hxg5 hxg5 12 h3! with a clear edge – Bareev.

10 f4! d7

At this point the game went 11 c3 e8! 12 fxg6 gxf4 with complications. 11 b2?! seems stronger; for example, 11...e8 12 fxg6 e6 13 d4 xe2 14 c3 with heavy pressure along the a1-h8 diagonal.

Position 32

A.Denker-V.Smyslov

USSR-USA match, Moscow 1946

1...c8!

Heading for the blocking square on d6. Equally strong is 1...c7?!, preparing ...c8-d6.

2 h5 f8 3 f2 f7 4 h6 g6 5 xf1 e7 6 g4 d6

Now the knight isn’t just blocking the d-pawn, it also attacks the weaknesses on c4 and e4.

7 e6

Or 7 c1 d8f8! (not 7...xc4 8 e6! with counterplay), when both 8 e6? xe4 and 8 e2 wd7 are troublesome for White.

7...e4 8 xb6 f5!

Instead of grabbing the exchange, Black launches a counterattack.

9 b2

After 9 f3 df8 nothing can stop...f5-f4.

9...f4 10 e6

Or 10 gxf4 wh4+ and the bishop is soon captured with check.

10...fxe3

Winning a piece, and soon the game.

Position 33

E.Geller-M.Najdorf

Candidates Tournament, Zürich 1953

1 a5!

Heading for c4-e3-d5 in order to exploit the key square d5. Only this route works, since on 1 d2?! Black has 1...c6! 2 c4 d5! with counterplay, when the e5-pawn is immune due to the pin along the h2-b8 diagonal. 1 d5? xd5 2 exd5 would be a strategical error, since the d5-square could no longer be used by the pieces.

1...c8
Mastering Chess Strategy

Now that ...d6-d5 can no longer be arranged, it is difficult for Black to find an active plan.

2...c4 c6 3.e3 a5 4.c4

There is no hurry to occupy d5. Geller first reinforces his queenside.

4...e6 5.b3 b6 6.xc8+ xxc8 7.ed5 edx5 8 edx5

Thanks to his great knight, White has a clear advantage.

Position 34

Wl. Schmidt-J. Dorfman
Polanica Zdroj 1978

1...b4!

Preparing the exchange of the main defender of the e4-square, the knight on c3.

2.wh4

Or 2.a3 xxc3 3.xxc3 ede4 4.xe4 wxe4 with a clear edge.

2...e7 3.g5

Thanks to his previous move, Black was ready to meet 3.xh5? with 3...f5 4.g5 xc3 5.xc3 ede4, winning – Dorfman.

3...f5

From here the knight can join the battle for the e4-square via d6 or even g3.

4.a3 xxc3 5.xxc3 g6 6.b4 ede4 7.wf4 f3 8.wd5 wxd5 9.xc8

In view of 9.wf4? g5, White has to hand over the c-file.

9...xh2+ 10.xe4 xxe4 11.f1 we6! 12.xe6 xe6

Intending xc2 with an overwhelming advantage.

Position 35

G. Timoschenko-J. Laengf
Seefeld 2003

1.d2!!

Heading for the protected square on e5.

1...g7 2.d2 f7 3.de1

White methodically improves his position, waiting with f3-e5 until the f4-pawn is safe, and a pin with h5 no longer exists.

3...g6 4.wf2 wh8 5.sh2!

Preparing g2-g3 to secure the f4-pawn.

5...ag8 6.g3 h6 7.g1!

The immediate 7.f3? permits 7...xf4! 8.gxf4 xfx4+ 9.h1 g3 with counterplay.

7...f8 8.f3 d7 9.e5 f6

A lesser evil was 9...xe5 10.xe5 with a clear, though not yet decisive advantage for White.

10.g4!

With the centre dominated by his strong knight, White launches a kingside attack.

10...fxg4 11.wh4! g3+ 12.xg3

The rook is immune due to mate.

12...h5 13.xg7 xg7 14.e2!

White wins the h6-pawn with a decisive advantage.

36. S. Krasnov-K. Vinogradov
St. Petersburg 1962

1.d7!

Heading for f8-g6-h4 with kingside pressure. Besides, on g6 the knight will be useful in eyeing the f4-pawn.

2.h1

Also after 2.h2 f8 3.h1 g6 Black’s game is easier; e.g. 4.c5 b6! 5.b4 bxc5 6.bxc5 a6 7.xf2 d3 etc.

2...f8 3.f2 g6 4.wd2 xd4

Also interesting is 4...wh4!? 5.g1 xd7 followed by ...wh8 and ...g8.

5.xd4 w6 6.w3?

Leaving the king under a cloud. Preferable was 6.xf6 xf6 7.d1 heading for e3.

6...h8 7.f1 d7 8.e2 g7

Now Black has an automatic attack. There followed 9.g1 xg8 10.d1 wh4 11.xg7 xg7 12.xc2 e8! 13.b5 h5 14...
\[ \text{Solutions} \]

**Position 37**

**I.Glek-Z.Kozul**

European Championship, Istanbul 2003

1...\texttt{g4}!

Exchanging the bishops in preparation for \texttt{e3-f5}. The immediate 1...\texttt{e3?!} permits 1...\texttt{exe4}, while 1 f3?! f5! lets Black free himself from the f5 weakness.

1...\texttt{xg4}

Now 1 f5? drops a pawn after 2...\texttt{exe5} 3...\texttt{xf5} 4...\texttt{xe4} 5...\texttt{xe4} 6...\texttt{d5}!, while 1...\texttt{ad8} 2...\texttt{f5}?! ...\texttt{xf5} 3...\texttt{exe5}, preparing \texttt{e3-d5}(g4), also favours White.

2...\texttt{hxg4} 3...\texttt{xf6} 4...\texttt{e3}! \texttt{xf8}

Both 3...\texttt{exe4?} 4...\texttt{f5} and 3...\texttt{exe4?} 4...\texttt{exe4} 5...\texttt{d5} fail tactically for Black.

4...\texttt{f5} 5...\texttt{xc6} 5...\texttt{d5}

Preparing \texttt{ed1}, with a pleasant advantage thanks to the opponent’s light square weaknesses.

**Position 38**

**A.Beliavsky-V.Nevednichy**

Paks 2004

1...\texttt{c5}!

Creating a protected square on d6, which can be exploited by the knight via d2-c4-d6, or even by the rook.

1...\texttt{c7}

The desired 1...\texttt{f5} permits 2...\texttt{exe5} 3...\texttt{d6}! with strong pressure: e.g. 3...\texttt{f4} 4...\texttt{d3+!}, intending 4...\texttt{h8?} 5...\texttt{g6}.

2...\texttt{d2}! 3...\texttt{f4} 4...\texttt{f1} 5...\texttt{e7} 4...\texttt{c4} 5...\texttt{fe6} 5...\texttt{b4}

The immediate 5...\texttt{d6} promises less due to 5...\texttt{d8} 6...\texttt{c4} 7...\texttt{e8}!, swapping the strong knight.

5...\texttt{c6}!

After 5...\texttt{d4}? 6...\texttt{exe5} White wins a pawn, but 5...\texttt{f5} 6...\texttt{exe5} 7...\texttt{d6} e4 was a more active try.

6...\texttt{a4} 7...\texttt{b5}?

After 6...\texttt{a8} 7...\texttt{ab6} 8...\texttt{f4} 8...\texttt{xc8} 9...\texttt{fxc8} 9...\texttt{d6} White is also better, but at least material remains even.

7...\texttt{ab6} 8...\texttt{b8} 9...\texttt{d6}!

Now that 8...\texttt{d6} loses to 9...\texttt{exc6}, followed by 10...\texttt{d7}, Black has to give up the exchange. The game continued 8...\texttt{bd4} 9...\texttt{bxc8} 10...\texttt{bxc8} 11...\texttt{b1} and White won without any problems.

**Position 39**

**C.Lutz-A.Yusupov**

Tilburg 1993

1...\texttt{d8}!

Redirecting the idle knight to h6, where it will be helpful in exploiting in the complex of weak squares on g4, f5 and e4.

2...\texttt{e1} 3...\texttt{f7} 3...\texttt{h2}

Preferable was 3...\texttt{f1}, followed by 4...\texttt{h2} – Yusupov, although I fail to see any big difference after 3...\texttt{h6} 4...\texttt{h2} ...\texttt{f5}! just like he played in the game. One major problem for White is the lack of good squares for his knights.

3...\texttt{h6} 4...\texttt{gf1} 5...\texttt{f5}!

Challenging the main defender of the e4-square.

5...\texttt{e2}

After 5...\texttt{xf5} \texttt{hxf5}, followed by 6...\texttt{e4+}, White also has a hard time.

5...\texttt{e4+} 6...\texttt{g1} 7...\texttt{g5}?

After seizing the centre Black starts a flank attack.

7...\texttt{g4}?

A tactical oversight. White had to accept long-term inferiority after 7...\texttt{fxg5} 8...\texttt{xg5} 8...\texttt{hxg5} 8...\texttt{g7}.

7...\texttt{gf4!} 8...\texttt{xf5} 8...\texttt{g7}+

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Now that 9 h1 runs into 9...f2 mate, Black wins material, and soon the game as well.

**Position 40**

**R.Vaganian-V.Akopian**

FIDE World Championship, Groningen 1997

1 b1!

Preparing d2-b3 in order to seize the protected square on c5. This is the best way to do it, since the temporary attack on the c6-pawn limits Black’s replies. In contrast, 1 b1?! preparing e4-c5, fails to 1...c5!, while 1 d2 allows 1...a5? 2 xb5 (or 2 b3?! a4) 2...xe5 3 dxe5 cxb5 with approximate equality.

1...dc8 2 bd2 a5

The desired 2...ab8 3 b3 c5? fails to 4 xb7 xb7 5 xc5 xc5 6 b4!, winning a pawn – Akopian.

3 b3 a4 4 c5 xc5 5 xc5

By recapturing this way White keeps the c5-square under control and facilitates the attack on the c6-pawn.

5...f8 6 ec1 wd7 7 c5c2

Thanks to his superior pawn structure, White keeps a slight edge.

**Position 41**

**S.Kristjansson-I.Sokolov**

European Club Cup, Kemer 2007

1 wd2!

Preparing a1 to seize the open file. 1 a1? is less logical since that rook is already well placed at f1.

1...b5 2 ae1 wd6 3 e5 c5 4 xg6+ hXg6 5 wf2

Perhaps the 5 e5? at once was stronger.

5...c4 6 d1 g5 7 e5!

Exploiting the protected square in order to double rooks.

7...e7 8 fe1 xe5?!

8...e8 was better, disputing the open file.

9 xe5 wh6 10 we3!

With the threat of 11 e8. Thanks to his control of the open file White is clearly better.

**Position 42**

**G.Levenfish-G.Lisitsin**

Moscow 1935

1 c6!

By exploiting a simple tactical detail White manages to seize the c-file. 1 b5? c5 was less appropriate.

1...xc6

After 1...b8 2 xc8+ xc8 3 c1 White is also much better.

2 dxc6 we6

Or 2...xc6? 3 b5, the tactical justification of 1 c6.

3 wc3

Thanks to his strong passed pawn White is clearly better.

**Position 43**

**V.Menchik-J.R.Capablanca**

Hastings 1930/31

1 ad7!

Preparing the doubling of rooks on the d-file.

2 ad1 fd8 3 a2

3 q5? loses outright to 3 xg5 4 xg5 af4, while after 3 e3 wa4! Black keeps a clear plus.

3...b5!

Intending ...b6-c4(a4) in order to improve the knight.

4 af1 b6 5 af4 h6 6 xd7 xd7 7 ad1?
Now the black queen manages to enter the enemy camp. The prophylactic 7 b3 was better.
7...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xd1+}} 8 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xd1}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{We4!}} 9 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Gg3}}
If 9 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ge3}} or 9 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ad2}}, then 9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc4}}, forking the b2 and e5 pawns.
9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc4+}} 10 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{We2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{We2+}} 11 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Da4!}}
Winning a pawn with a decisive advantage.

**Position 44**

\textbf{E.Geller-V.Simagin}

USSR Championship, Moscow 1951

1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ga6!}}
Weakening Black’s control of the open c-file.

1...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xa6}} 2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xa6}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc1}}
A sad necessity, but only thus can Black defend the a7-pawn.

3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc1}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wb8}} 4 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cd6!}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cd8}} 5 e5
After improving his bishop White secures it, and the pawn as well.

5...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc7}} 6 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{We4}} 7 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dd2}}
Of course not 7 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xd7??}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wb1+}} and Black wins material. But 7 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ge7?!}} was interesting as well.

7...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{We1+}} 8 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Df1}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Df8}} 9 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxa7}}
White has gained a pawn and there is a second one coming up on f7. He soon won the game.

**Position 45**

\textbf{M.Taimanov-G.Lisitsin}

Leningrad 1949

1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Aa3!}}
Preparing to triple the major pieces on the c-file.

1...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc7}} 2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{We7}}
The natural 2...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wbc8?}} fails to 3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxb7!}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Xc3}} 4 bxc3.

3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ff1!}}
A good exchange to facilitate an attack on the b7-pawn.

3...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf1}} 4 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf1}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Zc8}} 5 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wb3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ee8?}}
This leads to material losses, as does 5...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ge4}} 6 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe4}} fxe4 7 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxb7!}}. Black should have tried 5...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Gg4}}, challenging the strong knight on e5.

6 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxb7!}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxb7}} 7 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxb7!}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxb7}} 8 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc8}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wf8}} 9
\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Bb8!}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wd7}}
Equally painful is 9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxb8}} 10 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dd7+}} or 9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wa7}} 10 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc8}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Da7}} 11 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc6}}.

10 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{xa8}}
With the inevitable threat of 11 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc8}}. White soon won.

**Position 46**

\textbf{M.Vukic-M.Suba}

Vinkovci 1977

1...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wh6!}}
Disputing the open file.

2 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc4}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ge3}} 3 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc1}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{D7d5}} 4 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc8?}}
This doesn’t help White, but it was difficult for him to find a constructive move.

4...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc8}} 5 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wf2}}
The desired 5 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc1?}} fails to 5...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Gg4+}}.

5...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ef5}} 6 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxe2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{De3}} 7 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{We1}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Db5}}
Now Black’s pieces are very active.

8 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dd2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dd3}} 9 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Df1}}
If 9 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc4}}, then 9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxg3!}} 10 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxe3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxe3}} 11 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxe3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dxe3}} 12 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Wxg3}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc2+}} and wins – Suba.

9...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc2!}} 10 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dg2}}
Or 10 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Cc2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Xc2+}} 11 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Kh1}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{We4+!}} with similar consequences.

10...\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Xg2+}} 11 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Xg2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{We4+}}!
In view of 12 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dh2}} \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Dg1+}}, White resigned.

**Position 47**

\textbf{V.Potkin-Y.Kolotilin}

Russian Team Championship 2003

1 \textcolor{red}{\texttt{Ge3!}}
Intending $h3$ with attacking prospects, as well as $d3$ to increase the pressure towards $d6$.

1...$e7$ 2 $h3$ $g8$

By a sensible knight manoeuvre Black managed to parry the $h6+$ threat, as well as any sacrifice with $f5+$. However, the knight is now passive on $g8$.

3 $g3$ $h8$ 4 $b3$ $bd8$ 5 $d3$!

White reverts to his main target, the $d6$-pawn, now that the black knight is longer defending it.

5...$wb6$ 6 $h3$ $g7$

Perhaps 6...$e7$ was more tenacious; e.g. 7 $wf4$ $g7$ 8 $f3$ $g8$. In the game White simply wins a pawn.

7 $c2$ $d5$ 8 $e3$!

Before taking the pawn Potkin improves his knight.

8...$e7$ 9 $g4$ $g8$ 10 exd5 $cx$ 11 $xd5$ $xd5$ 12 $xd5$ $xd5$ 13 $xd5$ $h5$ 14 $e3$

With a sound extra pawn and safer king, White is practically winning.

**Position 48**

B. Avrukh-G. Sargissian

German League 2007

1 $d6$!

Exploiting the entry square at $d6$ in order to seize the open file.

1...$d4$

Or 1...e5 2 $wd2$ a5 3 $d1$ with strong pressure.

2 e5 $xd6$ 3 cxd6

Not 3 exd6? $w6$ with unclear play—Avrukh.

3...$wf8$ 4 $we4$ $b6$ 5 $h2$?!

The simple 5 $xb4$ was also strong. In the game White prepares a kingside attack.

5...$wh6$ 6 f3 $we3$

Practically the only move to resist the attack.

7 $xe3$ $xe3$ 8 fxg4 $c5$ 9 $g5$!

Intending $xh5$ with a favourable endgame.

**Position 49**

G. Gamrekeil-T. V. Petrosian

Georgian Championship, Tbilisi 1944

1...$a6$!

Preparing 2 $aga8$ in order to double rooks before clearing the a-file with ...a5xb4. In contrast, after 1...axb4?! 2 $xb4$ $a6$ 3 $c3$ White seizes that file with good chances for a draw.

2 $f2$ $ga8$ 3 $g1$ b5

Another good option was 3...$xb4$ 4 $xb4$ $b3$ (not 4...b5?! 5 $c3$) 5 $b1$ $bc5$! 6 $xc5$ $xc5$, winning a pawn.

4 $c3$

After 4 $c5$ $a6$ 7 $a6$! a white pawn soon falls on the queenside. In the game Black unleashes a little combination that also gains a pawn.

4...$b3$! 5 $b1$ $xb4$ 6 $xb5$

Or 6 $xb3$ $xc3$ 7 $xc3$ b4 and wins.

6...$xb5$ 7 $xb3$ $xa3$ 8 $bxa3$ $bxa3$ 9 $e2$

With an easy win.

**Position 50**

P. Hoeksema-E. Van den Doel

Leeuwarden 1994

1 $c7$!

Temporarily blocking the c-file to enable the doubling of rooks.

1...e5 2 $c3$ g5

After 2...exd4 3 exd4 $he8$ 4 $ac1$ Black is also suffering.

3 $ac1$ g4 4 fxg4 hxg4 5 $g2$ $e4$ 6 $h4$ $cg8$ 7 $xb8$!

Simplest, in order to seize the seventh rank.
Position 51
J. Timman-F. Vallejo Pons
European Championship, Budva 2009

1...\(\text{a}3\)!

Heading for \(d3\) in order to fight for the \(d\)-file. Besides which, the rook can also be used in a kingside attack.

1...\(\text{e}8\) \(\text{d}8\) 2 \(\text{e}3\)

The tempting 2 \(g3?\) failed to 2...\(xe5!\) on the theme of a back rank mate.

2...\(e8\)

Connecting the rooks with 2...\(e7?\) loses to 3...\(xd7!\), while 2...\(b5\) 3 \(zd6\) \(xd6\) 4...\(xd6\) is also bad for Black.

3 \(g4\) \(f5\)

After 3...\(f8?\) 4 \(g3\) White is winning.

4 \(xf6\) \(xf6\) 5 \(xd8+\) \(xd8\) 6 \(g6\)

With ideas like \(xh6\) and \(e5\), White keeps a clear advantage.

Position 52
B. Gelfand-M. Adams
Candidates match (game 4), Wijk aan Zee 1994

1...\(e2!\)

In order to double the rooks on the \(e\)-file, where Black has a problem with the unstable bishop on \(e6\), as well as with the \(e6\)-square itself.

1...\(f6\) 2 \(e1\) \(c8\)

After 2...\(g8?\) 3 \(b5!\) \(d7\) 4...\(xf5\) White wins a pawn.

3...\(c4!\)

Black's previous move left this diagonal unattended.

3...\(xc3\)

3...\(b6?\) failed to 4...\(b5\) \(d7\) 5...\(e6\), while after 3...\(f4\) 4...\(xf4\) \(xf4\) 5...\(d5\) \(d6\) 6...\(xf6\) \(xf6\) 7...\(d5\) White is clearly on top—Gelfand.

4...\(b3\) \(h6\) 5...\(a4\) \(b6\) 6...\(h4!\) \(e5\) 7...\(a2\) \(c5\) 8...\(g5!\)

An excellent strike, based on the line 8...\(xg5?\) 9...\(xg5\) \(xd4\) 10...\(d3!\) with a winning attack. After 8...\(g5!\) White enjoys a clear initiative and later won the game.

Position 53
E. Hedman-E. Berg
Norrköping 2004

1...\(e4!\)

Clearing the \(e\)-file for the rook, in order to enhance an attack on Black's weakened kingside.

1...\(a6\)

Black is urged to speed up his development. If 1...\(xe4\) 2...\(xe4\) \(d5\), then 3...\(g5!\), followed by...\(h3\) with a strong attack.

2...\(xf5\) \(xf5\) 3...\(xd6\) \(c5\) 4...\(e1!\)

Simple and strong. Now the rook controls a lot of important squares.

4...\(xd6\)

This won't turn out well, but after 4...\(g5\) 5...\(h5!\) \(xf6\) 6...\(h3\) Black is also in trouble.

5...\(xd6\) \(f8\) 6...\(e5!\) \(xd6\) 7...\(e2\)

White wins material.

7...\(xf6\) 8...\(xc5\) \(e6\) 9...\(e4!\) \(xe4\) 10...\(xe4\) \(xc5\) 11...\(c4+\)

Black resigned.

Position 54
J. Woda-A. Sznapik
Polish Championship, Slupsk 1989

1...\(d2!\)

Blocking the \(d\)-file as a preparation for the doubling of rooks.

2...\(f3\)

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Or 2 \( \text{Q}b1 \text{Q}e4! \) 3 \( \text{Q}h2 \text{Q}d7 \) with similar play. At this point 4 f3? fails to 4...\( \text{Q}e3+ \).

2...\( \text{Q}e7 \) 3 \( \text{Q}f2 \text{Q}a8d8 \) 4 b3 b6 5 \( \text{Q}b1 \text{b}5! \)

Creating an outside passed pawn.

6 axb5 cxb5 7 \( \text{Q}a3 \text{Q}b8 \) 8 \( \text{Q}e1 \text{b}4! \) 9 \( \text{Q}a1 \)

After 9 \( \text{Q}xb4 \text{axb4} \) 10 \( \text{Q}b1 \text{a}8 \), followed by \( \ldots \text{Q}a2 \), White is under pressure.

9...\( \text{Q}xe1 \) 10 \( \text{Q}fxe1 \) \( \text{Q}d2 \)

Seizing the seventh rank with a clear initiative.

**Position 55**

**L.Vogt-J.Franzen**

Stary Smokovec 1979

1 \( \text{Q}a1! \)

Preparing a2-a4 in order to clear the a-file for the white pieces.

1...f5

Preventing \( \text{Q}c3\)-e4. Both 1...\( \text{Q}b6? \) 2 \( \text{Q}e3 \) and 1...\( \text{Q}g5? \) 2 \( \text{Q}xg5 \text{hxg}5 \) 3 \( \text{Q}e4 \) lose material, while after 1...\( \text{Q}c5? \) 2 \( \text{a}4 \text{Q}c5 \) 3 \( \text{Q}eb1 \text{Q}g5 \) 4 \( \text{Q}e1 \), followed by \( \text{Q}f1 \), White keeps the initiative on the queenside.

2 \( \text{a}4! \text{Q}g5 \) 3 \( \text{Q}xg5 \text{hxg}5 \) 4 axb5 axb5 5 \( \text{Q}a6! \)

\( \text{Q}xc3 \) 6 \( \text{Q}xd6 \text{Q}c1 \)

After 6...\( \text{Q}8c7 \) 7 \( \text{Q}c6?! \) the strong passed pawn speaks in White's favour.

7 \( \text{Q}f1 \text{Q}xe1+ \) 8 \( \text{Q}xe1 \text{Q}c5 \) 9 \( \text{Q}c6! \text{Q}xc6 \) 10 \( \text{dxc6} \text{Q}a6 \) 11 \( \text{Q}d5! \)

Restricting Black’s kingside pieces. Now 11...\( \text{Q}c7 \) runs into 12 \( \text{Q}f7! \) – Vogt.

11...\( \text{Q}xe8 \) 12 gx\( f5 \text{Q}xf5 \) 13 \( \text{Q}xf5 \)

White later realized his extra pawn.

**Position 56**

**J.R.Capablanca-A.Alekhine**

St. Petersburg exhibition 1913

1 \( \text{Q}a5! \)

By attacking the bishop White gets ready for 2 \( \text{Q}c7 \), seizing the seventh rank. 1 \( \text{Q}c5 \) a6 2 \( \text{Q}ec1 \text{Q}e7 \) is less promising, as 3 \( \text{Q}c7?! \) fails to 3...\( \text{Q}c6 \).

1...\( \text{a}6?! \)

1...\( \text{W}a6 \) 2 \( \text{W}xa6 \text{Q}xa6 \) 3 \( \text{Q}c7 \text{h}6 \) was preferable. White has still managed to seize the seventh rank, but he doesn't win a pawn as in the game.

2 \( \text{Q}c7! \text{W}xc7 \) 3 \( \text{Q}xc7 \text{h}6 \)

In order to parry the threat of 4 \( \text{Q}g5 \), Black has to give up a pawn.

4 \( \text{Q}xb7 \text{Q}ac8 \) 5 \( \text{b}3 \text{Q}c2 \) 6 \( \text{a}4 \text{Q}e2 \) 7 \( \text{Q}h4! \)

With the threat 8 \( \text{Q}hxg6 \), while 7...\( \text{Q}f6 \) fails to 8 \( \text{Q}d7+ \). White soon won.

**Position 57**

**D.Sharma-V.Baklan**

Balaguer 2006

1...\( \text{Q}a6! \)

Intending 2...\( \text{Q}e4 \), followed by 3...\( \text{Q}h6 \), with a kingside attack. 1...\( \text{Q}e6?! \) is less accurate due to 2 \( \text{Q}g5 \).

2 \( \text{Q}c1 \)

Or 2 \( \text{Q}e5 \text{Q}e4! \) 3 \( \text{Q}xe4 \text{dxe}4 \) 4 \( \text{Q}e5 \text{Q}h6 \) 5 \( \text{Q}b3 \)

In order to meet 5...\( \text{Q}h4 \) by 6 \( \text{Q}g3 \).

5...\( \text{Q}e6 \) 6 \( \text{Q}e3 \) f6 7 \( \text{Q}c4 \text{Q}d5! \)

Heading for \( h5 \).

8 \( \text{Q}c3?! \)

Exposing the major pieces to a fork. 8 \( \text{Q}d2?! \), intending \( \text{Q}f1 \) and \( \text{Q}f1 \), seems preferable; e.g. 8...\( \text{Q}h5 \) 9 h3 \( \text{Q}g6 \) 10 \( \text{Q}h2 \) with chances to defend.

8...\( \text{Q}c6 \) 9 \( \text{Q}d1 \text{Q}h5 \) 10 \( \text{h}3 \text{Q}e7! \)

With the double idea of 11...\( \text{Q}d5 \) and \( \text{Q}f5-h4 \).

11 \( \text{Q}d2 \) e3! 12 \( \text{Q}xe3? \)

The last chance was 12 \( \text{Q}xe3 \text{Q}xh3 \) 13 \( \text{Q}f3 \), when 13...\( \text{Q}g6+ \) followed by \( \ldots \text{Q}f5-h4 \) keeps a strong attack.

12...\( \text{Q}d5 \) 0-1

In view of 13 \( \text{Q}xh5 \text{Q}xh5 \) with the double threat of 14...\( \text{Q}xe3 \) and 14...\( \text{Q}g6+ \).
Position 58
V.Kramnik-G.Hertneck
German League 1995

1...\textit{e}g1!

Intending g2-g3 in order to clear the g-file towards the target on g7.

1...\textit{xf}8?!

1...\textit{xf}5 2 g3 \textit{fg}x3+ 3 \textit{xf}x3 \textit{g}g8 was preferable, securing the g-pawn, although after 4 \textit{e}e2?, preparing \textit{cg}1 as well as \textit{d}d2-e4, White remains clearly on top – Kramnik.

2 g3 \textit{f}5

Black sacrifices a pawn, aware that after 2...\textit{fxg}3+ 3 \textit{x}g3 he couldn’t save it anyway; e.g. 3...\textit{h}h6 4 \textit{a}c4! \textit{e}e8 5 \textit{cg}1 \textit{f}8 6 \textit{c}c5 with the inevitable threat of 7 \textit{exe}6+.

3 \textit{xf}4 \textit{f}7 4 \textit{c}c4 \textit{b}8 5 d5!

A strong breakthrough that creates a passed pawn, as well as a protected square for the knight on d4.

5...\textit{xd}5 6 \textit{c}xd5 \textit{b}6

6...\textit{xd}5 7 \textit{d}d4 \textit{b}b6 8 e6 \textit{f}6 9 \textit{x}g7 \textit{xe}6 10 \textit{exe}6 \textit{exe}6 11 \textit{cc}7! and White wins – Kramnik.

7 d6

White has an overwhelming advantage.

Position 59
A.Khalifman-V.Filippov
Russian Team Championship 1995

1 \textit{h}f1!

With the powerful idea of 2 \textit{e}e4 \textit{fxe}4 3 \textit{f}xe4, clearing the f-file towards the black king. The immediate 1 \textit{e}e4?! is less convincing due to 1...\textit{fxe}4 2 \textit{fxe}4 \textit{d}d7 followed by ...\textit{we}6 and ...\textit{f}f6, but 1 \textit{f}4?! softening up the long diagonal makes sense as well.

1...\textit{d}d7!

1...\textit{d}d7 was safer, enabling a later ...\textit{d}d7-f6, although after 2 \textit{a}a3 \textit{we}6 3 \textit{c}c2!, with the double idea of 4 \textit{d}d6 and 4 \textit{d}d3, White keeps excellent compensation.

2 \textit{a}a3 \textit{e}6

Other moves can be met in the same way, e.g. 2...\textit{we}6 3 \textit{e}e4!, heading for g5 or d6.

3 \textit{e}e4! \textit{fxe}4

Or 3...\textit{wd}8 4 \textit{g}g5+ \textit{f}f6 5 \textit{c}c3 \textit{wb}6 6 \textit{f}f4, winning – Khalifman.

4 \textit{fxe}4 \textit{f}f4 5 \textit{gxf}4 \textit{hd}8 6 \textit{d}d6 \textit{g}8 7 \textit{fxe}5 \textit{w}h4

At this point the simple 8 \textit{we}3!, preparing \textit{f}f2 and \textit{xd}f1, would have left Black with a hopeless position – Khalifman.

Position 60
A.Karpov-B.Spassky
Candidates match (game 3), Leningrad 1974

1 a5!

Preparing \textit{ab}1 and \textit{b}3-b4 in order to clear the b-file towards the target on b7. Please note that the immediate 1 \textit{bb}1? would have failed to 1...a5!, closing the queenside, while 1 \textit{h}h1+?! \textit{g}8 followed by ...\textit{f}7-f6 isn’t at all productive for White.

1...f6 2 \textit{eb}1 \textit{fxg}5 3 b4!

Karpov is not distracted by the g5-pawn, but sticks to his plan.

3...\textit{f}f5?!

Since 3...\textit{cb}4 4 \textit{xb}4 is hopeless for Black, Spassky tries a counterattack.

4 \textit{g}g5!

More technical than 4 \textit{exf}5?! e4 5 \textit{d}d2 \textit{exf}3+ 6 \textit{xf}3 \textit{gxf}5, when the connected pawns and the strong bishop on g7 yield Black some slight compensation for the piece.

4...\textit{d}d4 5 \textit{bx}c5 \textit{xc}5 6 \textit{bb}6!

The d6-pawn proves to be doomed.

6...\textit{f}f6 7 \textit{h}h1+

A clever intermediate check to displace
the enemy king. Now 7...\texttt{\texttt{g}}8 fails to 8 \texttt{x}d6 \texttt{x}g5 9 \texttt{x}g6+, so Black is forced to give up the exchange.

7...\texttt{\texttt{g}}7 8 \texttt{h}6+ \texttt{g}8 9 \texttt{x}f8 \texttt{x}f8 10 \texttt{x}d6

With a decisive advantage.

\textbf{Position 61}

\textbf{V.Anand-G.Kasparov}

Geneva (rapid) 1996

1...\texttt{c}7!

Preparing ...\texttt{e}8-a8 in order to seize the long diagonal.

2 a3 \texttt{a}8 3 \texttt{e}3 \texttt{d}3

Thanks to the mating motif the knight doesn’t need to retreat.

4 \texttt{c}2 b4! 5 \texttt{a}2

Or 5 \texttt{x}d3? \texttt{x}c3!, again exploiting the mating motif.

5...\texttt{c}5 6 \texttt{e}2

After 6 axb4 \texttt{e}4 7 \texttt{e}2 \texttt{x}c2 8 \texttt{x}c2 \texttt{h}7! the threat of ...\texttt{x}g3 decides.

6...\texttt{bxa3} 7 b4 \texttt{a}4! 8 \texttt{bxc5} \texttt{a}2x2 9 \texttt{c}2 \texttt{xc}5

Black has a clear initiative.

\textbf{Position 62}

\textbf{L.Sokolov-G.Kasparov}

Wijk aan Zee 1999

1 \texttt{w}f1!

A decisive queen transfer with two concrete ideas: 2 \texttt{a}(\texttt{a})h3 with mating motifs, and 2 \texttt{g}2, creating deadly threats at g7 and g8.

1...\texttt{e}6

One of several insufficient replies. Both 1...\texttt{d}6 2 \texttt{h}3! and 1...\texttt{h}5 2 \texttt{g}2 \texttt{h}7 3 \texttt{g}7! followed by a check on g8 led to immediate defeat, while after 1...\texttt{e}7 2 \texttt{g}2 \texttt{f}8 White wins by 3 \texttt{h}3 \texttt{h}7 (or 3...\texttt{h}6 4 \texttt{c}1l) 4 \texttt{g}5! \texttt{x}h3 5 \texttt{x}d4+ \texttt{x}d4 6 \texttt{f}6+ \texttt{g}7 7 \texttt{f}5+, followed by 8 \texttt{x}h3+.

2 \texttt{g}2!

With the double threat of 3 \texttt{g}8+ and 3 \texttt{h}3! Q(R)xh3 4 \texttt{g}7 mate. Black resigned.

\textbf{Position 63}

\textbf{W.Winter-A.Alekhine}

Nottingham 1936

1...\texttt{e}8e7!

Preparing 2...\texttt{e}8 to step up the pressure on the open file. After 1...\texttt{e}7?! 2 \texttt{d}1 the queen has a smaller range than from e8, besides which, in the event of multiple captures on e2, it will be better off behind both rooks.

2 \texttt{d}1 \texttt{e}8 3 \texttt{f}3 \texttt{a}5!

With ideas like ...\texttt{c}4 and ...\texttt{a}4+.

4 b3

Or 4 \texttt{x}d5?! \texttt{x}e2 5 \texttt{x}e2 \texttt{x}e2 6 \texttt{x}a5 \texttt{g}3! 7 \texttt{f}3 \texttt{e}4 with a strong attack.

4...\texttt{c}4! 5 \texttt{c}1

If 5 bx\texttt{c}4?, then 5...\texttt{a}4+ 6 \texttt{c}1 \texttt{a}3+ 7 \texttt{b}1 \texttt{b}6+ 8 \texttt{a}1 \texttt{c}2 etc.

5...\texttt{e}3+ 6 \texttt{x}e3 \texttt{x}e3+ 7 \texttt{x}e3 \texttt{x}e3 8 \texttt{f}2 \texttt{b}5!

Eyeing the weak square on d3, thus forcing White to give up material.

9 \texttt{c}1 \texttt{c}3 10 \texttt{x}e7 \texttt{e}7 11 \texttt{e}1 \texttt{d}7!

Black enjoys a sound extra pawn.

\textbf{Position 64}

\textbf{N.Short-I.Zilber}

Hastings 1979/80

1 g5!

Softening up the long diagonal for a future battery. Less precise is 1 d5?! cxd5 2 \texttt{d}4 \texttt{c}6 3 \texttt{f}6 d4 and Black defends.

1...\texttt{x}d5 2 d5! \texttt{c}xd5

After 2...\texttt{c}xd5 3 \texttt{d}4 mate is inevitable, so Black has to give up a piece.

3 \texttt{c}xd5 \texttt{x}d5 4 \texttt{e}3!

Keeping the queens in view of Black’s
4...f4 5 \textit{Wb6}

With 6 \textit{xa7 coming up, White has a nearly decisive advantage.}

\textit{Position 65}

\textbf{Ye Jiangchuan-J. Granda Zuniga}

Biel Interzonal 1993

1...\textit{Wd8!}

Heading for h4 to enhance an attack on the white king. Less promising is 1...\textit{e5?!} 2 \textit{xe5 dxe5 3 c5 while 1...\textit{f6?!} 2 \textit{xf6!} \textit{xf6} 3 \textit{d3} f4 4 \textit{c3 leads to a rather unclear game.}

2 \textit{c3?!}

After 2 \textit{a1} \textit{g5} White is also under pressure. 2 \textit{d2}, heading for f3, seems preferable, when 2...\textit{Wh4} 3 \textit{f3} \textit{g3} 4 \textit{d3} \textit{e8} keeps the initiative.

2...\textit{Wh4} 3 \textit{b5} \textit{f6!} 4 \textit{xf6}

White can't play 4 \textit{xd6? due to 4...\textit{g4!} 5 \textit{xc8} \textit{g3} – Granda.

4...\textit{xf6} 5 \textit{c3} f4 6 \textit{wc2} \textit{d7} 7 \textit{we4}

With the double idea of 8 \textit{xe3} and 8 \textit{d3}.

7...\textit{Wh5!} 8 \textit{f3} \textit{g5} 9 c5 \textit{e5} 10 \textit{e2} dxc5 11 d6 b6

With a sound extra pawn and preserved attacking chances, Black is clearly better.

\textit{Position 66}

\textbf{A.Karpov-L.Polugaevsky}

Candidates match (game 6), Moscow 1974

1 \textit{f4!}

Preparing \textit{f2-g3} with an attack. Also interesting is 1 \textit{xf6?! gxf6 2 \textit{h6 with attacking chances.}

1...\textit{a8} 2 \textit{f2} \textit{a8}

If 2...\textit{c3?! , preventing White’s plan, then 3 \textit{d2 intending 3...\textit{b3?} 4 \textit{b1.}

3 \textit{g3}

After 3 \textit{e5} \textit{e7 4 f5} \textit{e6} Black gets some relief, so Karpov keeps the option of e4-e5.

3...\textit{c4 4 \textit{f3}! \textit{c2} 5 \textit{d1}

The last piece is mobilized for the attack.

5...\textit{d4} 6 \textit{h6} \textit{c6} 7 \textit{f5}

7 \textit{xf7! was also strong, e.g. 7...\textit{c4 8 \textit{xe7 \textit{xe7 9 c7+} \textit{xe7 10 g3 mate.}

7...\textit{b2}

Or 7...\textit{e5 8 \textit{xe7} \textit{xe7 9 e3} with mate to come.

8 \textit{c1} \textit{b5} 9 \textit{h6+} \textit{b8} 10 \textit{xf7+} \textit{xf7} 11 \textit{xf7}

With a decisive advantage.

\textit{Position 67}

\textbf{J. Hector - B. Sahl}

Vejle 1994

1...\textit{b8!}

Heading for a7 in order to seize the g1-a7 diagonal, where there is no opposing white bishop.

2 \textit{f2}

The restrained 2 \textit{d2} \textit{a7} 3 a5 seems better.

2...\textit{a7} 3 \textit{d5} \textit{d5} 4 \textit{exd5}

Or 4 cxd5 \textit{e5 5 \textit{d2 f5! with counterplay (Donev), now that 6 ef5?! fails to 6...\textit{xf5! 7 \textit{xd5 e3!.}

4...\textit{d4 5 f1 e3! 6 a5 f2 e8 7 \textit{d4?!}

A lesser evil was 7 \textit{d4. After the text, Black should have played 7...\textit{e1! 8 \textit{xe1 \textit{xe1 9 \textit{xe1 \textit{xd4 10 e7 \textit{a4 11 b3 \textit{f8!}

12 \textit{e4 \textit{c5 13 bxa4 g6 followed by ...\textit{xa5, with a clearly better endgame – Donev.}

\textit{Position 68}

\textbf{V. Kovacevic-Y. Seirawan}

Wijk aan Zee 1980

1...\textit{d7!}
Preventing 2...a8h8 to fight for the h-file.

1...d2

After 2 d2?! a6! 3 c2 h8 Black reaches his objective anyway. But 2 f1!? h8 3 g2 might have been a better choice, enabling a recapture with the queen on h1.

2...h8 3 g1

Or 3 hxh8 hxh8 and the queen takes command of both the h-file and the a1-h8 diagonal.

3...c7 4 b1 h3! 5 b3 h8!

Now Black enjoys a pleasant initiative.

6 f1 f8d7 7 f4 e5 8 xe5 xe5 9 xe5 xe5 10 f3 d7 11 c2 d4 12 g2 h1

Black has clearly the more active game.

Position 69

T.Radjabov-Bu Xiangzhi

Internet 2000

1 a3g4!

Preventing e1-g3 in order to triple the major pieces along the g-file. The simple 1 a6 was also possible, but the text is more incisive.

1...d8

1...f6? fails to 2 xg7+ h8 3 h7 mate.

2 e1 e7

After 2...f8 3 g3 the threat of 4 hxh6+ is inevitable.

3 g3 f8 4 xg7! xg7

The lesser of evils. 4...fxg7 failed to 5 hxh6+! xhx6 6 h3+ with mate, while on 4...xg7 the same 5 hxh6+ is decisive; e.g. 5...g8 6 h3 f6 7 h8+ f7 8 h5+. Finally, 4...hxg4 5 xg4+ f5 6 xf8 wins material for White.

5 xg7+ fxg7 6 xg7+ xg7 7 wh3 g6

Or 7...f7 8 g4 with similar play.

8 g4 f7 9 wh5+ f8 10 xf5

White’s material advantage is decisive.

Position 70

N.Pushkov-V.Savon

Orel 1995

1...0-0-0!

The safest play. Instead, the game saw 1...0-0? and Black was crushed after 2 h5! ad8 3 hxg6 hxg6 4 e4! wa5 5 d1 d5 6 xf6+ xf6 7 xf6 exf6 8 xf6! fxg6 9 e6+ f7 10 xg6 wc7 11 xf7+ with a quick win, now that 11...xf7 fails to 12 h8+. 1...e6?, delaying casting, is also inappropriate due to 2 d5! and White opens the position towards the black king.

2 d5 b8

Securing the king even further and enabling a future...c8. Now that both kings are located on the same flank, White has more difficulties in developing an attack.

Position 71

J.Bellon Lopez-D.Merino Mejuto

Spanish Championship, Gijon 1971

1...g6!

Preventing...g7 and...0-0 in order to secure the king on the kingside. Instead, the game continued 1...0-0-0? 2 b4! b8 3 c4 d7 4 bc3 g6 5 a5 e6 6 b3 g7 7 b5 with a strong attack.

2 a3

A quick knight manoeuvre to c4 seems like the only way of justifying White’s unorthodox opening set-up.

2...g7 3 fxe5 dxe5 4 c4 e4!

Defending the e5-pawn and enabling...e4-d6 as a response to a3.

5 a3 d6 6 a5 d7

Preparing...0-0 with a good game for Black.
Position 72
Y.Averbakh-O.Panno
USSR-Argentina match, Buenos Aires 1954

1...e2!

With the centre safely blocked, this is the simplest way of securing the king and connecting the major pieces. In contrast, after 1...e2?! c7 2 0-0-0 b5 Black gets some slight counterplay.

1...g7 2 h4! d7 3 hxg6 hxg6 4 h1

Thanks to his clever first move White can transfer the queen immediately into the attack.

4...e7 5 h8+ f7 6 wh6 f8 7 h1 b8

Black had run out of sensible moves, and now there follows a decisive blow.

8 xf4! c7

Or 8...exf4 9 h4, followed by xf4+.

9 wh2

White soon won.

Position 73
A.Plaininec-V.Hort
Hastings 1974/75

1...f8!

The safest place for the king. 1...0-0?! 2 a1 is less appropriate, as Black has a problem with the h4-pawn, but 1...0-0-0? and 1...d8?!, heading for c7, were interesting alternatives. Of course 1...xe2?? was bad due to 2 a1.

2 a1 e5 3 d1

If 3 f3, then 3...fd7! just like in the game.

3...fd7

Reinforcing the strong blocker on e5. 3...g7? 4 f3 h3 5 g3 e4 was also interesting.

4 f3 xf3+ 5 xf3 g5

Preparing 6...g8 with a good game.

Position 74
S.Lejlic-J.Hellsten
Swedish Championship, Ronneby 1998

1...c8!

Black discards long castling in order to fully exploit the semi-open c-file. The immediate 1...e7?! is equally strong, whereas 1...0-0-0?! would leave the rook passive on d8 and expose the king to an attack after 2 fd1, followed by moves like a3 and b2-b4.

2 d1 e7!

Thanks to the strong blockade on e5 White can’t really exploit the location of the black king, which is even useful in defending the d6-pawn.

3 bd4

Or 3 f4 xf3 4 xf3 eg4, followed by 5 wc5.

3...c5 4 xb7?!

Now White’s queenside falls apart. A lesser evil was 4 xc5 xc5 with a nice endgame for Black.

4...b8 5 xa6 b6 6 we2 xb2 7 db1 a8 8 d2 xa4 9 fd1 b6

Thanks to his better pawn structure and superior piece activity, Black holds the upper hand.

Position 75
M.Johansson-J.Hellsten
Malmö 1999

1...d7!

The most flexible choice. Black doesn’t yet define the destiny of his king, but prefers to improve his minor pieces by ...f6 and ...c5. In contrast, 1...0-0?! proves risky after 2 h3, with ideas like 2...b4 3 es! dxes 4 xh7+! xh7 5 wh5, while 1...0-0-0?! also exposes the king after 2 a5
bxa5 (or 2...b5? 3  \text{\texttt{Bb6}}) 3  \text{\texttt{Qa4 Qd7}} 4  c3, preparing \text{\texttt{We2}}.

2  \text{\texttt{Gg3 Bf6}} 3  \text{\texttt{Wd2 h5?!}}

Again 3...0-0?! is premature due to 4  \text{\texttt{Gf1}}, followed by f4-f5 with an attack.

4  \text{\texttt{Ae2 h4}} 5  \text{\texttt{Gh3 Gc5}} 6  \text{\texttt{Af3 Ad8}}

6...0-0-0?! was possible, when the knight on c5 reinforces the queenside defence.

7  \text{\texttt{Gg4?}} 6  \text{\texttt{Gf6}} 8  \text{\texttt{Gg7}} 9  \text{\texttt{Wf2 Ge7l}}

Attacking the e4-pawn as well as the whole h1-a8 diagonal, which became vulnerable after White’s g2-g4.

10  \text{\texttt{Gxc5 Bxc5}} 11  \text{\texttt{Ag2 Ac6}} 12  \text{\texttt{Gc1}}  \text{\texttt{Bb7}}

Black has the initiative and his king is probably the safer one.

Position 76

J.Polgar-L.Polugaevsky
Match (game 7), Aruba 1991

1...0-0!

With the kingside safely blocked the black king is in no danger on g8, whereas the queenside may now be used for an attack. In contrast, after 1...0-0-0?! 2  \text{\texttt{We2}}, preparing \text{\texttt{Gh1}} and f4-f5, White has a slight initiative.

2  \text{\texttt{Ghe1}}

Perhaps 2  \text{\texttt{We2}} a5 3  \text{\texttt{Gh1}}, preparing f4-f5, was still a better choice.

2...a5 3  \text{\texttt{Ab5 Ac8}} 4  \text{\texttt{Cc1}}

Polugaevsky suggests 4  \text{\texttt{Gg4?}} a4 5  \text{\texttt{Cc1}}, with the idea of \text{\texttt{Gd2}}, although it’s not clear what White should do after 5...a3; e.g. 6  \text{\texttt{Bxe4}} 7  \text{\texttt{Gxe4}} \text{\texttt{Gxe4}}, when 8  \text{\texttt{Gxe6?}} fails to 8...\text{\texttt{Gc2+}}.

4...d5!

Taking command of the light squares.

5  \text{\texttt{Exd5}}

Or 5  \text{\texttt{Gxe5}} 6  \text{\texttt{Bb6}} 6  \text{\texttt{b3 Ge4}} 7  \text{\texttt{Gge2}} a4, continuing the attack.

5...\text{\texttt{Exd5}} 6  \text{\texttt{Gg4 Ffd8}} 7  \text{\texttt{Ge2 Bb6}}

Heading for c4 with a strong initiative.

Position 77

R.Byrne-A.Kotov
USA-USSR match, New York 1954

1...\text{\texttt{Af7!}}

Preparing a king march to the opposite flank to neutralize White’s coming attack.

2  \text{\texttt{Gf3}}

After 2  \text{\texttt{Gh5}}+  \text{\texttt{Ge7}} 3  \text{\texttt{Gh7 Gxc4}} Black obtains counterplay, but 2  \text{\texttt{Gb1}}, preparing \text{\texttt{Gf1}}-d2-b3 and a4-a5, seems more logical in relation to the enemy plan.

2...\text{\texttt{Gf7}} 3  \text{\texttt{Gf1 Gd8}} 4  \text{\texttt{Gh3 Gh8!}}

4...\text{\texttt{h6?!}} is less flexible since it would complicate a future ...g7-g5 advance.

5  \text{\texttt{Gg4 Gc7}} 6  \text{\texttt{Gg3 Gb8}} 7  \text{\texttt{Gf2 Gc7}} 8  \text{\texttt{Gw2 Ac8}}

Black has managed to consolidate his position and the king is safe on b8. A future plan is ...g7-g5 followed by ...\text{\texttt{Gc8-e8}}-g7 and ....\text{\texttt{Cc8-d7-e8}} in preparation for ...h7-h5.

Position 78

E.De Haan-E.Vorobiov
Agios Kirykos 2009

1...\text{\texttt{b6!}}

Preparing ...\text{\texttt{Gc6-b7}} in order to safeguard the king, and at the same time protecting the knight from the threat of 2  \text{\texttt{Gf5+}}. The immediate 1...\text{\texttt{Gc6?!}} was possible too, e.g. 2  \text{\texttt{d5}}+  \text{\texttt{Gb6}} 3  \text{\texttt{Gb1+ Gb6}}, followed by ...\text{\texttt{b7-b6}}.

2  \text{\texttt{Ge2}}

Or 2  \text{\texttt{d5?! Gw8}} 3  \text{\texttt{Gg4+ Gd8}} and the king is out of danger.

2...\text{\texttt{Gc6}}! 3  \text{\texttt{d5+ Gb7}} 4  \text{\texttt{Gf3 Gf6!}}

Avoiding any problems on the h1-a8 diagonal.

5  \text{\texttt{e5 Gxe5}} 6  \text{\texttt{Gxe5 Gh6}}

Black has excellent chances of converting his extra piece.
Position 79
N.Gritsenko-N.Firman
Ukrainian Junior Championship 1999

1...b8!  
Correctly estimating that White’s attack can be parried by a “brave king” manoeuvre.

2...h8!  
Not 2...h6? 3 a6 b6 4 g5 bxc5! 3 bxc5! 4 g5 bxc5! 5 b6 and White wins.

2...f6?!  
If 3...b6, then 3...h6! intending 4 a6 b6 5 g5 bxc5! 6 g6+ h7 7 xh6+ xg6 8 xh6+ b7 9 g7+ b6! 10 a6 h6 11 xh6+ a3!  
With a decisive grip on the queenside.

Position 80
R.Åkesson-F.Bindrich
Stockholm 2007

1...a7!  
Preventing a “brave king” manoeuvre. Instead, the game continued 1 a6 f3? 2 a7 f3! 1...a6 f3 2 a6 f3 xg6+ 3 b6 and a draw was agreed.

1...d5!  
Thus White covers the sensitive f1-square and threats mate himself.

2...a5 3 e4 4 c3 a3 5 b4!  
The king escapes and White wins.

Position 81
M.Ilescas Corduba-U.Andersson
Ubeda 1997

1...c5!  
Positioning the clearing the centre for the bishop pair. 1...d5?! 2 e4 is less powerful.

2 e4  
2 e4? fails to 2...d5! 3 exd5+ gxd5 4 xg5 d4 5 e4! 6 xh5 e4 7 xh6+ xh6 8 xh6+ xg6 9 xh6+ xh6! 10 e4+ xg6 11 f5 e4! Black is clearly better. The best option might be 2...a7!?, when the simple 2...d6 keeps the initiative.

2...e6!  
By 2...a5 3 xg2 3 xg2 e6 Black could win a pawn, but in the game he goes for more.

Position 82
P.Matovic-J.Hellsten
Belgrade 2002

1...c5!  
Positioning the clearing the centre for the bishop pair. 1...b4?! 2 e4 is less powerful.

2 a4!  
2...e5! 3 a4! 4 c5 e4! 5 bxc5! 6 xh6+ xh6 7 xh6+ xg6 8 xh6+ xg6 9 xh6+ xh6! 10 e4+ xg6 11 f5 e4! Black is clearly better. The best option might be 2...a7!?, when the simple 2...d6 keeps the initiative.

2...e6!  
By 2...e6 3 xg2 3 xg2 e5 Black could win a pawn, but in the game he goes for more.
3 fxe5
Both 3 dx5 dxe5 4 f5 $g5! 5 $e4 $xe4 6 $xe4 $d2 and 3 $e4 $xe4! 4 $xe4 cxd5 5 cxd5 $e2 $xd4 are equally troublesome for White.

3...dxe5 4 dx5 $xe5+ 5 $g1
Or 5 $xe5? $xd2 6 $xe2 $f2! with decisive pressure.

5...$g3 6 $f1 $fe8 7 $xe8+ $xe8
Intending 8...$e2 with a huge plus.

Position 83
T.V.Petrosian-A.Lilienthal
USSR Championship, Moscow 1949

1 h3!
Preparing g3-g4 in order to clear some space for the bishop pair. 1 g4!? is interesting as well; e.g. 1...fxg4 2 $xg4 $c7 3 $f2, preparing $g1 with some initiative.

1...$f6 2 $g4! fxg4 3 $xg4
Located side by side the pawns deny the enemy knights any protected squares.

3...$c7 4 $f2 $h6 5 $h1 $e3+
Desperate, but after 5...$h7 6 $g1, followed by $e3 and $c3, Black is also in deep trouble.

6 $xe3 $e4+ 7 $g2 $f7 8 $d3
White later won the game.

Position 84
A.Miles-L.Portisch
Buenos Aires Olympiad 1978

1...f6!
Clearing some space for the bishops before White manages to consolidate by $d6, $g2-f3, etc.

2 $d6
After 2 exf6 gxf6 Black obtains a potential passed pawn, and White loses his outpost on d6.

2...$g6 3 $c4
If 3 $xb7? then 3...$b8, when 4 $d7? fails to 4...$e8 5 $c7 $xb7! 6 $xb7 $c6+ etc.

3...$d4 4 $g2 $e8!
The bishop shifts to the more promising h1-a8 diagonal. Now there appears the threat of 5...$c6+ 6 $f1? fxg5, winning a pawn, so White dissolves the tension.

5 exf6 $xf6 6 $ac1 $c6+ 7 $f1 $c5
With ideas like 8...$f3, winning the battle for the d-file. By now the range of the bishop pair is rather worrying for White, whereas the knights are lacking protected squares. Black later won.

Position 85
S.Tiviakov-G.Kasparov
Wijk aan Zee 2001

1...b5!
Intending ...b5-b4 to weaken the a1-h8 diagonal for the bishop, in particular the d4-square.

2 $f1 b4 3 cxb4 cxb4 4 $e3 $g8 5 $g3 $d4!
Now the bishop is doing a great job in helping his colleague to put pressure on g2.

6 $c4 $g7 7 $h5 $h7 8 $e3 $b5 9 $d2
Or 9 $c4 $d5 with a clear advantage - Kasparov. At this point Black played 9...a6 and subsequently won the game. However, by 9...$xe3! 10 $xe3 $xd5 11 $d1 $g4! he could have obtained a decisive advantage - Kasparov. Indeed, the only way for White to stop the plan of...h5-h4 is by 12 $e1 and 13 h4, but then he loses the pawn on b3.

Position 86
V.Smyslov-S.Reshevsky
World Championship,
The Hague/Moscow 1948

1 $xe6!
Giving up the bishop pair in exchange for another advantage: a weak enemy pawn on d6. Both 1 \( \text{Wh}4?! \text{g}5 \) and 1 f4?! \( \text{d}7 \) are less effective, as well as 1 \( \text{d}5 \)! \( \text{d}7 \) 2 \( \text{e}3 \text{f}6 \) and Black defends.

1...\text{f}xe6 2 \( \text{Wh}4! \text{d}7 \)

Or 2...\text{x}h4 3 \text{g}xh4 and the d6-pawn falls right away.

3 \( \text{d}8+! \text{xd}8 \) 4 \( \text{xd}8 \text{d}7 \)

After 4...\text{c}6 5 \text{c}7 or 5 \text{b}6 that pawn is also doomed.

5 \( \text{c}7 \text{c}5 \) 6 \( \text{xd}6 \)

White wins a pawn with a decisive advantage.

**Position 87**

**M.Lupu-L.D.Nisipeanu**

Rumanian Championship, Baile Herculane 1996

1...\text{xc}3 2 bxc3 \( \text{xe}4! \)

A typical exchange sacrifice that yields Black the bishop pair and control of the long diagonal. Also interesting was 1...\text{d}4?! 2 \( \text{d}1 \text{b}7 \) with some pressure.

3 \( \text{c}4 \)

White isn’t eager to accept the “gift”, but he must do so eventually in order to keep the material balance.

3...\text{f}6 4 \( \text{e}5 \text{a}8 \) 5 \text{c}4 \( \text{d}6 \) 6 \( \text{g}4 \text{xg}4 \) 7 \( \text{xe}4 \text{xe}4 \) 8 \( \text{xg}4 \text{c}6! \)

Reinforcing the control of the h1-a8 diagonal. 8...\text{a}8?! followed by ...\text{c}6 is less powerful, since the white king has a hiding square on h2.

9 \( \text{e}2 \text{f}5 \) 10 \( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{e}5! \)

Clearing some space for the other bishop and enhancing a further kingside attack.

11 \( \text{f}2 \text{b}8! \)

The threat of 12...\text{b}3 increases the pressure on White.

12 \( \text{c}3 \text{exf}4 \) 13 \text{gxf}4 \( \text{c}7 \) 14 \( \text{b}2 \text{xb}2 \) 15 \( \text{xb}2 \text{xf}4 \)

Intending ...\text{d}6-g6(+) with a decisive attack.

**Position 88**

**C.Valiente-J.Hellsten**

Santiago 2007

1...\text{d}5!

Black “messes up” the game before White manages to consolidate, with a long-term advantage thanks to the bishop pair.

1...\text{f}5 2 \text{d}5 \text{e}5 3 \text{ad}1 is less promising.

2 \( \text{c}5 \text{e}4! \)

Other moves, such as 2...\text{f}5, permit 3 \text{f}3 followed by \( \text{f}2 \), stabilizing the game.

3 \( \text{xe}4 \)

If 3 \( \text{b}1 \), preparing 4 \text{f}3, then 3...\text{f}5! with the idea of 4 \text{f}3? \( \text{g}3 \) 5 \text{g}3 \text{f}4+ etc.

3...\text{dxe}4 4 \( \text{h}4 \)

Or 4 \( \text{xe}4 \text{h}3 \) 5 \text{xb}7 \text{xf}1 6 \text{xf}1 \text{f}5!, followed by ...\text{f}5-\text{f}4 with an initiative.

4...\text{g}4 5 \text{f}3 \text{xf}3 6 \text{xf}3 \text{xf}3 7 \text{xf}3 \text{e}7! 8 \text{ae}1

After 8 \text{xb}7?! \text{d}5 9 \text{g}1 \text{a}8, intending ...\text{fb}8, White is in trouble.

8...\text{d}5

Thanks to his strong knight Black is clearly better.

**Position 89**

**M.Solmundarson-V.Smyslov**

Reykjavik 1974

1...\text{g}6!

A strong exchange sacrifice that lets Black keep his pawn structure intact, and yields him a grip on the dark squares. Less promising was 1...\text{xe}4?! 2 \text{xe}4 \text{c}7 3 \text{h}3 \text{f}4+ 4 \text{d}2 with some initiative for White.

2 \( \text{h}8 \text{h}+ \) 3 \( \text{b}1 \text{wh}8 \) 4 \( \text{d}3? \)

Now this bishop becomes very restricted. 4 \text{exf}5 \text{exf}5 5 \text{d}3 was preferable –
Smyslov, when 5...\texttt{w}f6 6 \texttt{w}f2 \texttt{a}g7 keeps the initiative.

4...\texttt{e}e3 5 \texttt{e}e1 \texttt{f}4! 6 \texttt{a}f1 \texttt{w}f6 7 \texttt{a}h3 \texttt{d}d7! 8 \texttt{w}d1+ \texttt{e}e7 9 \texttt{h}h1 \texttt{w}h4 10 \texttt{f}1 \texttt{g}5

Slowly preparing the ...g5-g4 breakthrough.

11 \texttt{d}d3 \texttt{d}d4 12 \texttt{w}e1 \texttt{w}h5 13 \texttt{w}e2 \texttt{e}5

Securing the strong bishop with a clear advantage.

**Position 90**

V.Golod-B.Avrukh

Israel national Championship, Tel Aviv 2002

1...\texttt{a}a5!

Attacking White on the light squares before he is able to stabilize by c4-c5.

2 \texttt{w}e3

After 2 \texttt{w}c3?! dxc4 3 bxc4 \texttt{c}c8 the threat of 4...\texttt{d}xc4 and 5...b5 is unpleasant for White, while 2 \texttt{b}b4 can be met in the same way as in the game.

2...dxc4 3 bxc4 \texttt{b}5!

Black sacrifices a pawn in order to get a grip on the light squares and reduce the power of the bishop on b2.

4 cxb5 \texttt{d}d5 5 \texttt{w}e4 axb5 6 \texttt{x}b5 \texttt{b}3!

Installing the threat of 7...\texttt{x}f3 8 \texttt{x}f3 \texttt{d}d2, and vacating the a5-square for the queen.

7 \texttt{a}a1 \texttt{w}a5 8 \texttt{a}d3 \texttt{g}6 9 \texttt{g}4 \texttt{f}c8! 10 \texttt{x}g6

At this point a draw was agreed. There could have followed 10...hxg6 11 \texttt{w}e4 \texttt{c}7!, preparing 12...\texttt{c}2, with approximate equality – Avrukh.

**Position 91**

D.Loza-J.Veloz

Riobamba 2009

1...\texttt{w}d4!

Forcing a queen exchange that will finish off White's counterplay and help the realization of the extra pawn. 1...\texttt{w}a6?! is less exact due to 2 \texttt{w}d2! \texttt{x}e3 3 \texttt{x}e3 with attacking chances, while 1...\texttt{x}e3?! 2 \texttt{x}e3 \texttt{d}xc6 3 \texttt{x}h6! lets White recover the pawn.

2 \texttt{w}xd4 \texttt{x}d4 3 \texttt{a}c1 \texttt{b}c6

Thanks to his extra pawn Black has a clear advantage.

**Position 92**

J.Hellsten-J.Munoz

Ambato 2009

1 \texttt{a}d3!

Swapping pieces to facilitate the realization of the extra pawn.

1...\texttt{a}a5

Or 1...f5 2 \texttt{f}f4 \texttt{f}f7 3 \texttt{h}4!, when 3...\texttt{x}h4? fails to 4 \texttt{h}1.

2 \texttt{a}xh7+ \texttt{x}h7 3 \texttt{d}d3 \texttt{c}c4 4 \texttt{b}3 \texttt{d}d6 5 \texttt{a}4 \texttt{g}6

6 \texttt{a}d1!

Offering more exchanges.

6...\texttt{g}7 7 \texttt{x}c8 \texttt{x}c8 8 \texttt{a}c1 \texttt{c}c6 9 \texttt{g}3 \texttt{x}f8 10 \texttt{e}4 \texttt{d}xe4+ 11 \texttt{f}xe4 \texttt{e}8 12 \texttt{c}3

White later converted his extra pawn into a win.

**Position 93**

J.Timman-L.Kavalek

Montreal 1979

1...\texttt{w}f3!

In order to swap the active white queen, which will help Black neutralize the passed pawn on d7 and realize the extra pawn.

2 \texttt{w}xf3

2 \texttt{x}e5? was impossible due to 2...\texttt{b}b7, while 2 \texttt{w}h4 \texttt{f}6, preparing ...\texttt{b}7, is also bad for White.

2...\texttt{x}f3 3 \texttt{c}4

Or 3 \texttt{d}d3 \texttt{x}d7 4 \texttt{x}e5 \texttt{x}d2 5 \texttt{x}d2 \texttt{x}b3 and wins – Nesis.

3...\texttt{x}c4 4 \texttt{x}c4 \texttt{x}c3 5 \texttt{e}1 \texttt{x}c4 6 \texttt{x}e5 \texttt{f}7
With the double intention of \(7...\text{axa4}\) and \(7...\text{xd4}\). Black is winning.

**Position 94**

**V.Ivanchuk-J.Piket**

Biel Interzonal 1993

\[1 \text{wb5!} \]

Swapping queens to facilitate the realization of the extra pawn.

\[1...\text{xb5} \]

\[1...\text{a7?} \] failed to 2 \(\text{xd5}\), while after

\[1...\text{c6} 2 \text{xb6 xb6 3 a4},\] preparing \(\text{c7}\),
White keeps his advantage.

\[2 \text{xb5 a4} \]

One pawn stops two. \(2...a6 3 \text{c7}\) is less sensible, since \(3...\text{c4?} \) fails to 4 \(\text{xc4 dxc4 5 xe4}\).

\[3 \text{xe5} \]

Perhaps \(3 \text{a7?} \) was even stronger, disputing the open file – Ivanchuk.

\[3...\text{g5} 4 \text{h2 f7 5 d7 ffd8 6 xc8 xc8} \]

On 6...\(\text{xc8}\) there follows 7 f3.

\[7 \text{b6 f6 8 c7! e8 9 f3} \]

White soon won more material, and the game.

**Position 95**

**D.Mielle Palau-J.Hellsten**

Salinas 2005

\[1 \text{wa1+!} \]

Forcing a winning pawn ending.

\[2 \text{g2 xa2 3 xbx6 xc4 4 xxa5 d5+}! \]

White resigned in view of 5 \(\text{xd5 exd5 6 f3 g7 7 e3 f6 8 xd4 e6}\).

**Position 96**

**M.Adams-R.Kasimdzhanov**

FIDE World Championship, Tripoli 2004

\[1 \text{xb4!} \]

Initiating an exchange combination that will help in realizing the extra pawn.

\[1...\text{xb4} 2 \text{e7+ xe7 3 xd6} \]

Unfortunately for Black, he cannot even save the b4-pawn.

\[3...\text{e2 4 d4! h5 5 xbd4 wf3 6 h4 c8} \]

If 6...\(\text{e8}\), then 7 \(\text{f4 wd1+ 8 xh2 xe1 9 wb7}\) – Adams.

\[7 \text{d2!} \]

White is ready to give up one of the pawns in order to swap rooks; e.g. \(7...\text{xb3 8 d8+ xxd8 9 xdx8+ dh7 10 a5}\) with an easy win.

\[7...\text{c3 8 f4 c6 9 h2} \]

Alternatively, \(9 \text{c4! xxc4 10 bxc4}\) in the spirit of the previous note.

\[9...\text{xb3} \]

Or 9...\(\text{c1} 10 \text{d8+ h7 11 d3+ g8} 12 \text{f3}\) and wins – Adams.

\[10 \text{d8+ h7 11 d1!} \]

A timely double attack. White soon won.

**Position 97**

**S.Gligoric-I.Balanel**

Moscow 1956

\[1 \text{g3!} \]

Inviting a queen exchange, after which the bishop pair would become even more significant.

\[1...\text{xd3} \]

If 1...\(\text{xe4?}\), then 2 e6! \(\text{fxe6 3 xe1}\) with a strong attack, while 1...\(\text{ff5 2 xe1 c7}\) (parrying the threat of \(\text{e5-e6}\)) 3 \(\text{b1}\) \(\text{wd7 4 c6}\) lets White keep the advantage.

\[2 \text{hgx3 d8 3 f3 g6?!} \]

Black should have preferred 3...h5, complicating the g3-g4 advance – Nesis.

\[4 \text{g4! h6 5 f4!} \]

In the absence of queens it becomes easier for White to advance his kingside majority.

\[5...\text{c8 6 d1!} \]
Preparing a nice combination based on the seizure of the seventh rank and the e5-e6 advance. Worse is 6...\texttt{xc8?!} \texttt{xc8} and the g4-pawn gets into trouble, as similarly after 7 \texttt{xd2?} \texttt{xd2} 8 \texttt{xd2 \texttt{c8}}! on the next move.

6...\texttt{c2} 7 \texttt{d7}! \texttt{g2+} 8 \texttt{f1} \texttt{xa2} 9 \texttt{e6}! \texttt{d5} 10 \texttt{xf7+} \texttt{g8} 11 \texttt{f8+} \texttt{g7} 12 \texttt{xe8}

With the double threat of 13 \texttt{f6}+ and 13 \texttt{e7}. White soon won.

\textbf{Position 98}

\textbf{A.Sokolovs-V.Baikov}

Moscow 1992

1 \texttt{e3}!

To eliminate Black’s bishop pair and take the game closer to the ending, in consideration of the favourable pawn structure.

1...\texttt{xe3}

1...\texttt{d6}? fails to 2 \texttt{xb6}, while after 1...\texttt{e7?!} the knight is deprived of its destiny on \texttt{e7}.

2 \texttt{xe3} \texttt{e7} 3 \texttt{d4} \texttt{f7} 4 \texttt{f4}

White starts pushing his pawn majority. Another method of doing this was 4 \texttt{f3}, followed by \texttt{f2}, \texttt{g2-g4} and \texttt{h2-h4}, thus avoiding exposure of the e4-pawn.

4...\texttt{e8} 5 \texttt{f2} \texttt{g6} 6 \texttt{f5!}

Parrying both threats at the pawns on \texttt{e4} and \texttt{f4}. Now if Black installs a knight on \texttt{e5}, White can always swap it off.

6...\texttt{e5} 7 \texttt{e1} \texttt{d7} 8 \texttt{d1} \texttt{b5} 9 \texttt{a3} \texttt{c5} 10 \texttt{f3} \texttt{c7}

Here or later, 10...\texttt{b4} is well met by 11 \texttt{c3!}, putting an end to Black’s queenside dynamics.

11 \texttt{g4} \texttt{h6} 12 \texttt{g3}

Preparing \texttt{f4} and \texttt{e4-e5} with a clear endgame advantage.

\textbf{Position 99}

\textbf{O.De la Riva Aguado-R.Ponomariov}

Pamplona 2005

1...\texttt{h6}!

Eliminating the opponent’s bishop pair and taking the game closer to an endgame, where Black is favoured by his mobile pawn majority.

2 \texttt{xe6}

After 2 \texttt{e5?} \texttt{f6} the bishop is in trouble.

2...\texttt{xh6} 3 \texttt{h3} \texttt{g7}!

Preparing to improve the knight by 3...\texttt{g8-f6(e7)}.

4 \texttt{e2} \texttt{c7} 5 \texttt{xd8} \texttt{xd8} 6 \texttt{d1} \texttt{xd1+} 7 \texttt{xd1} \texttt{f5}!

The first step in the pawn majority advance.

8 \texttt{d2} \texttt{g8} 9 \texttt{g2} \texttt{f6} 10 \texttt{f3} \texttt{e5} 11 \texttt{f1} \texttt{e4} 12 \texttt{e2} \texttt{f7} 13 \texttt{e1} \texttt{e5}

With the long-term plan of 3...\texttt{g7}, ...\texttt{h7-h6}, ...\texttt{g6-g5} and ...\texttt{f5-f4}, whereas White is unable to do the same thing on the queenside.

\textbf{Position 100}

\textbf{B.Spassky-T.V.Petrosian}

World Championship (game 23), Moscow 1966

1 \texttt{g5}!

Swapping queens to reach an endgame where the pawn structure speaks in White’s favour.

1...\texttt{cxd4}

After 1...\texttt{xf2?} 2 \texttt{f3} \texttt{g1} 3 \texttt{b5!} White wins material.

2 \texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} 3 \texttt{xd4} \texttt{b7} 4 \texttt{b3}!

The exchange of rooks will help White in attacking the weak pawns on a7 and c7.

4...\texttt{xb3} 5 \texttt{axb3} \texttt{a8} 6 \texttt{c4} \texttt{e8}

After 6...\texttt{d5} 7 \texttt{g3} followed by \texttt{g2} White also has a huge advantage.
7 a4 6d6 8 g3!

With the simple idea of 9 g2, winning the a7-pawn.

8...f8

8...c8 9 c4 or 8...a5 9 b4 is equally unsatisfactory.

9 g2 c8 10 xa7

White enjoys a sound extra pawn.

Position 101
J.Hellsten-L.Rojas
Santiago 2006

1...c8!

Having an isolated pawn Black should keep the maximum number of pieces on the board. The game continued 1...xf3?! 2 xf3 c5 3 g2 xd3 4 xd3 e5 5 xe5 xe5 6 ac1! with a clear advantage (see example 41 in the section on improving the rook).

2 c1 b8

There can follow 3 b5 d5 4 xc8 xc8 5 b4 b7 6 d4 c4 7 c1 with just a slight advantage for White.

Position 102
M.Chiburidanidze-N.Alexandria
World Women’s Championship (game 7), Georgia 1981

1...0-0-0!

Keeping the queens on for a while so as not to leave White with the two bishops in the endgame. The game continued 1...xd4? 2 xd4 0-0-0 3 d2 d7 4 xg7 xc5 5 h1 and White had a long-term advantage.

2 wb4

After 2 xe5 xe5 White is tactically unable to maintain the bishop pair – Nesis.

2...d7

Thanks to his active queen and the un-safe location of White’s king, Black has considerable counterplay.

Position 103
Y.Balashov-B.Larsen
Buenos Aires 1980

1...xe5!

Swapping pieces to reach an endgame where the weak pawns on c3 and a2 will speak in Black’s favour.

2 dxe5?!

A tempting recapture, but this just helps Black’s plan. Preferable was 2 xe5 d6 3 e2, followed by f3, keeping the queens on the board – Minic/Sindik.

2...c4! 3 xc4

Or 3 b1 c5+ 4 g2 d4 with an initiative.

3 dxc4 4 e2 b5 5 e3?!

Now Black obtains a passed pawn. Here the active 5 e6 seems preferable.

5 d3 6 xa7

Or 6 d4 b4! and Black achieves his goal anyway.

6...xc3 7 g2 d3 8 e3 b4

Black later converted his passed pawn into victory.

Position 104
S.Tiviakov-F.Berkes
European Team Championship, Plovdiv 2003

1 xe5!

Preparing 2 xf5 and 3 d4 in order to exchange as many pieces as possible, considering the opponent’s isolated pawn.

1...xe5 2 xf5! xf5

After 2...xf5 3 d4 xd4 (or 3 f6 4 e7! forcing the exchange of bishops) 4 xd4 White is also slightly better, thanks to his active bishop and Black’s isolated pawn.
Mastering Chess Strategy

3...d4! #e8 4 #e3 #h7 5 #xe5 #xe5 6 #f4!
   The greedy 6 #xa7? permits 6...#g6 with ideas like ...#xh3 and ...#e2 — Tiviakov.
6...#e4 7 #f3 #e5 8 #d4 #g6 9 #d1
   Intending #d2 and #d1 in order to work on the d5-pawn, thanks to which White keeps a small but enduring advantage.

**Position 105**

Cu.Hansen-V.Eingorn
Dortmund 1988

1...#c7!
   Preparing ...#a6 in order to exchange the “bad” bishop for White’s “good” one.
2 #d2
   Or 2 #g5?! #xg5 3 #xg5 h6 4 #f3 #a6 with a slight black edge — Eingorn.
2...#a6 3 #c2
   After 3 #xa6 #xa6 4 #ac1 #ab8, preparing ...#c6, ...#c7 and ...#fc8, Black has a minimal advantage thanks to his superior bishop and the vulnerable pawn on d4.
3...#b8 4 #ac1 #b5 5 #e3 #ca6 6 #a3 #c7 7 #h4 #fc8
   Black has no problems, and the once “bad” bishop has become excellent on b5.

**Position 106**

T.Markowski-V.Haralambof
Bern 1996

1 #e2!
   Heading for g4 to swap Black’s good bishop.
1...b6
   Or 1...f5 2 exf5 #xf5 3 #g4 #xg4 4 hxg4, intending 5 #xc5 #xc5 6 #e4 with a typical “good knight vs. bad bishop” scenario.
2 #g4 #xg4 3 hxg4
   The bishop exchange has emphasized Black’s light square weaknesses, and his next move makes things even worse.
3...f6?!
   More solid was 3...#b8, followed by ...#d7.
4 #b5!
   With the inevitable plan of #a7-c6. Now Black can’t play 4...#xe4? due to 5 #d3.
4...#h8 5 #a7 #a8 6 #c6 #c7 7 #xc5 bxc5
   Eyeing the a5-pawn, with a huge positional advantage.

**Position 107**

B.Ivkov-S.Kagan
Petropolis Interzonal 1973

1...#g7!
   Preparing 2...h6 and 3...#g5 to eliminate White’s “good” bishop.
2 #fd1
   Here the restrictive 2 g3? h6 3 h4 deserved attention.
2...h6 3 #b1 #g5 4 a3
   Getting on with the plan of b3-b4.
4...#xe3 5 fxe3 fxe4 6 #xe4
   After 6 #xe4? #xe4 7 #xe4 #c5 the knight clearly outshines the bishop.
6...#f7 7 b4 axb4 8 axb4 #d7!
   Avoiding 8...#xe4? 9 #xe4, when White gets closer to achieving c4-c5. In the game Black keeps the important c5-square under control, whereas the bishop isn’t really doing anything on e4.
9 #d3
   The aggressive 9 c5 is well met by 9...#xc5 10 d6 c6 11 b5 #b4 – Bartashnikov.
9...#af8
   Black has no problems.

**Position 108**

M.Stolberg-M.Botvinnik
USSR Championship, Moscow 1940

1...#d7!
   Preparing #f5 in order to swap White’s
good bishop. Besides which, there now appears the threat of \( \text{...} \text{gxh3} \).

2 \textbf{f4?!}

This weakens e4 for the rest of the game. 2 \texttt{Wc2} or 2 \texttt{Wb1}? does nothing to stop \texttt{...gxh3}, but 2 \texttt{f3} was more cautious, when 2 \texttt{...gxh3}? 3 \texttt{gxh3 Wxh3} fails to 4 \texttt{Wf2!} refuting the attack. Thus Black should prefer 2 \texttt{...Wf5} with a slight advantage.

2\ldots \texttt{Wf5}

Also interesting was 2 \texttt{...Bxh3!?} with a strong attack; e.g. 3 \texttt{gxh3 Wxh3} 4 \texttt{Qb5 De4!}, preparing \texttt{...e6-g6}.

3 \texttt{Wc2 De4!}

Exploiting the protected square. White’s next move makes things worse, but his game was difficult anyway.

4 \texttt{b5?}! \texttt{Bxd3} 5 \texttt{Wxd3 Bf8} 6 \texttt{Bg3 Bc4} 7 \texttt{Bc1} 7 \texttt{Bxd5 Bxd5} 8 \texttt{Wxc4 De3} 9 \texttt{Bxe3 Bxe3} is equally unappealing.

7\ldots \texttt{Bac8} 8 \texttt{Bxa2 Bf8} 9 \texttt{a4} \texttt{Bb4}

With strong pressure.

\textbf{Position 109}

\textbf{Y.Estrin-K.Pytel}

Albena 1973

1 \texttt{Bb5!}

Getting rid of the bad bishop and reducing White’s control over the light squares, in particular c4. The alternatives were less promising; e.g. 1...f4?! 2 c4! or 1...c7?! 2 c4! dxc4 3 Bxc4, in both cases with a slight edge for White.

2 \texttt{Bd3}

After 2 \texttt{Bxb5?! axb5} the weak pawn on c2 and the entry square on c4 are more relevant factors than the doubled b-pawns.

2\ldots \texttt{Bc4} 3 \texttt{h4?}

This sacrifice is hardly any correct, but White was short of active plans.

3\ldots \texttt{gxh4} 4 \texttt{Wf4 Wg5!} 5 \texttt{g3 hxg3} 6 \texttt{fxg3 Bf7} 7 \texttt{Bf2 Bc7}

The extra pawn will be decisive.

\textbf{Position 111}

\textbf{S.Erenburg-S.Porat}

Ashdod 2004

1 \texttt{Bg5!}

Intending \texttt{h4-g3} to swap Black’s good bishop and prevent the \texttt{...Bh5-f4} manœuvre. The bishop transfer to g3 is indeed a common idea in this French structure.
1...0-0 2 h4 h6

Black prepares e6-e5 in order to get rid of the backward pawn on e6.

3 g3 xg3 4 hxg3 e5 5 dx5 6 xe5 6 xe5 6 xe1?! is less accurate due to 6...eg4!, intending ...f7-h5 with some initiative – Erenburg.

6...wx5 7 wd2 f5 8 fe1

Thanks to the isolated pawn, White is slightly better.

Position 112

J.H.Donner-B.Ivkov
Santa Monica 1966

1...h5!

Preparing ...h7 and ...h6 in order to swap the “bad” bishop for the “good” one.

2 cc2

The immediate 2 a4 permits the annoying 2...b5!.

2...h7 3 fc1 a6 4 hxh6 xh6 5 a4 xc2 6 xc2 cc8

Black manages to swap the rooks before White puts a knight on b6.

7 xc8 cc8 8 g1

Or 8 ac3 a5, followed by ...b5-b4, just like in the game.

8...b5 9 ac3 b4!

Fixing the b3-pawn on a light square.

10 b1 b5 11 cc1 b6

Preparing ...d7-c5 with a clear advantage. Evidently the dark-squared bishop is missing in the white camp.

Position 113

J.Hellsten-E.Djingarova
Menton 2003

1 xd8+!

Swapping the four rooks in order to emphasize Black’s “bad” bishop. Less clear was 1 wd2?! e5! or 1 ed6?! xd6 2 cxd6 e5!, while after 1 hd1?! x7 2 x7 wh4+! is a little annoying.

1...xd8 2 d1 d5

Preventing 3...wd8 in the fight for the d-file. Of course 2...xd1 3 xd1 xb2?? failed to 4 xd8 mate.

3 f3! xd1 4 xd1 w7

Or 4...xb2+?! 5 g3 g6 6 wd7 wa3 7 xb7 xc5 8 xa6 with excellent winning chances.

5 b4 f8+?

5...f6 was preferable, when 6 wd3 followed by d1-b3 keeps the advantage.

6 d3! h6?! 7 wh7 wh4+ 8 g3 wd8

Or 8...wh2+ 9 g2 and wh8-b8 decides.

9 wh8+ e7 10 xg7 wd2+ 11 xc2 a5 12 d4

White is winning.

Position 114

M.Najdorf-Y.Averbakh
Candidates Tournament, Zürich 1953

1 d3!

Keeping the knight in order to avoid a “good knight vs. bad bishop” scenario. Instead, the game continued 1 d2? c4 2 e1 xb4! 3 cb4?! a3 4 b3 db5 5 e3 cd2 6 ab cd6 7 ac5 b5! 8 ab cd8 and Black had a huge advantage thanks to the terrible bishop on e1.

1...c4

After 1...xc3?! 2 xb6 White obtains some counterplay.

2 fc1

Preparing f1-e1-d1 with a worse, but far from lost endgame.

Position 115

J.Hellsten-J.Piera
Madrid 2001

1 e4!
Swapping the knight on f6 in order to facilitate an attack. Also interesting is 1 \( \text{xe6? } \text{c7} 2 \text{xf6! exf6} 3 \text{e4 } \text{g7} 4 \text{xg6+ } \text{h8} 5 \text{xh5} \) with an attack.

1...\text{xe4} 2 \text{xe4 } \text{g7} 3 \text{wh4} 

Another good option is 3 \text{g2!?} followed by 4 \text{h1}.

3...\text{d4} 4 \text{e4 } \text{g4} 

Black manages to exchange queens, at the cost of a weak pawn on g4.

5 \text{hxg4 hxg4} 6 \text{a3! } \text{a6} 7 \text{f5} 

Preparing 8 \text{e4} with a huge advantage.

**Position 116**

**R.J.Fischer-O.Panno**

Buenos Aires 1970

1 \text{h6!} 

Exchanging the defender on g7 as a first step to an attack on Black’s king.

1...\text{d7} 2 \text{g5!} 

Installing the double threat of 3 \text{xe7} and 3 \text{xg7 } \text{xg7} 4 \text{h5+}.

2...\text{xc1} 3 \text{xc1 } \text{h6} 4 \text{wh6 } \text{c8} 5 \text{xh8+ } \text{xc8} 6 \text{h5! } \text{d8} 7 \text{g5 } \text{f8} 8 \text{e4}!! 

A fantastic move that finishes off Black’s resistance.

8...\text{e7} 

After 8...\text{exe4} 9 \text{dxe4} the knight enters decisively on f6.

9 \text{h7! } \text{h7} 10 \text{hxg6 fxg6} 

Or 10...\text{f8} 11 \text{g7 } \text{g6} 12 \text{hxg6 fxg6} 13 \text{wh8}+ etc.

11 \text{hxg6 } \text{g5} 12 \text{h5!} 

Thanks to the previous sacrifice, the knight reaches the square it was dreaming about: f6.

12...\text{f3+} 13 \text{g2 } \text{h4+} 14 \text{g3 } \text{g6} 15 \text{f6+! } \text{f7} 16 \text{h7+} 

In view of the mate, Black resigned.

**Position 117**

**P.Keres-M.Taimanov**

USSR Championship, Moscow 1951

1 \text{e4!} 

Exchanging the main defender of Black’s kingside.

1...\text{exe4} 

The desirable 1...\text{bd7} loses material after 2 \text{xd6 } \text{xe2} 3 \text{xc8 } \text{xb2} 4 \text{xa7}.

2 \text{exe4 } \text{exe4} 3 \text{xe4 } \text{h6?!} 

After 3...\text{g6} 4 \text{d4 } \text{f6} 5 \text{h4!}, preparing \text{h4-h5}, Black is also under pressure, but in the game he will suffer more.

4 \text{g5! } \text{d6} 

Aware that 4...\text{g6} failed to 5 \text{xf7}, Black offers the h7-pawn. However, Keres just gets on with the attack.

5 \text{h4! } \text{d7} 6 \text{f5 } \text{f6} 7 \text{xf6 } \text{xf6} 8 \text{wh7+ } \text{f8}, then 9 \text{e1} g6 10 \text{xf7} with a quick win – Keres.

8 \text{xf7! } \text{c1} 

Or 8...\text{xf7} 9 \text{d7+ } \text{g8} 10 \text{xd6} etc.

9 \text{whh7+} 

Even stronger was 9 \text{xd6! } \text{xd1+} 10 \text{wh2 } \text{c7} 11 \text{e6+} with a quick mate.

9...\text{f8} 10 \text{xd6 } \text{xd1+} 11 \text{h2 } \text{xd5} 12 \text{xb7 } \text{e5+} 13 \text{g3} 

White soon won.

**Position 118**

**M.Kazarian-J.Hellsten**

Ambato 2009

1...\text{e4!} 

To exchange the defender on g2.

1...\text{e4?!} is another good move, though not as energetic as the text.

2 \text{f3} 

After 2 \text{f3 } \text{d5} White ends up with a weak pawn on g3.

2...\text{f5} 3 \text{e5 } \text{xg2} 4 \text{xf2 } \text{a5} 5 \text{f3?} 

After 5 \text{e1 } \text{ae8} Black keeps the pres-
sure, but now he is able to proceed with a direct attack.

5...æe6?

A more static plus is obtained by 5...æe2 6 æd1! ëe3+ 7 æxe3 æxe3 8 æxe3 ëd5.

6 ëd1?! ëc4+! 7 gxf4 ëg6+ 8 ëf5

The only move.

8...æxf4 9 ëb1 ìxg5+ 10 ëf3 ëf6

With a decisive attack.

Position 119
S.Garcia Martinez-V.Smyslov
Sochi 1974

1 ëb4!

In order to swap the defender on c6.

1...æxb4 2 ëxb4 ëa8

After 2...æa7 3 ëd4!, with ideas like ëc6+ and ëb3, Black is in trouble.

3 ëc3! ëxf4 4 ëxa6?

A tempting sacrifice to intensify the attack, although given Black's resource on move 5, Rybka suggests 4 ëd2, preparing the same sacrifice.

4...ëxd1+ 5 ëa2 bxa6?

Black overlooks 5...ëd5! 6 ëb6 ëxe4, when White has to settle for a draw by 7 ëb5, followed by ëa5-c7-a5.

6 ëb6 ëb7

Preparing to meet 7 ëc7 by 7...ëb8. However, White has a much stronger option at his disposal.

7 ëa5! ëb8 8 ëc6! ëg1

The only move.

9 ëxg1 ëxc6 10 ëxc6 ëb7 11 ëe3 ëg4 12 ëc8+ ëb8 13 ëc3

Black resigned.

Position 120
V.Kotronias-A.Baburin
Calvia Olympiad 2004

1 ëh4!

Swapping the main defender of Black's kingside. In contrast, after 1 ëh4?! ëc8! 2 0-0-0 ëa6 Black defends - Kotronias.

1...bxc5

Or 1...fxg4 2 ëxe7 ëxe7 3 ëg5 ëxf4 4 ëxh7, when both 4...ëf5 5 ëf6+! ëxf6 6 ëh2 and 4...ëd7 5 ëxg6+ ëg7 6 ëe6+ ëf7 7 ëh6! lead to a winning attack – Kotronias.

2 ëxe7 ëxe7 3 ëg5

Now that Black's dark-squared bishop is gone, this knight cannot be exchanged.

3...cxd4 4 ëxh7 ëb4 5 ëe2!

This quiet move connects the rooks with decisive effect. Black resigned in view of 5...ëxc3 6 ëxc3 ëxc3 7 ëh1 and the mate is inevitable.

Position 121
A.Beliavsky-E.Gufeld
Novosibirsk 1976

1 ëd5!

Eliminating the main defender of Black's kingside. Less promising is 1 ëh6? ëxe4! 2 ëxe4 ëxd4 or 1 ëh2?! ëxc3! 2 bxc3 ëxc3 with counterplay.

1...ëxd5 2 exd5 ëb7?

Underestimating White's attack. Correct was 2...ëe5 3 ëf2 ëf8! 4 ëh4 ëf7 with chances for a defence.

3 ëh2 ëf7

After 3...h6 4 ëxh6 both 4...ëxd4 5 ëxd4! ëxd4 6 ëe3, followed by 7 ëh7+, and 4...ëxd4 5 ëde1! ëe5 6 ëxe5 ëxe5 7 ëxe5 lead to a white win. The text Black prepares to meet 4 ëxh7? with 4...ëh8; however, there is a better way of capturing on h7.

4 ëf4+! ëg8 5 ëxh7! ëxd5

This loses material, but 5...ëxh7 failed to 6 ëf7 with the inevitable 7 ëh1+ next.

6 ëxg7+! ëxg7 7 ëf5+ ëxf5 8 ëh6+ ëf7 9 ëxd5 ëxc2+ 10 ëa1

White soon won the game.
Position 122
N.Zhukova-A.Korotylev
Wijk aan Zee 2005

1 a4d1!

Eyeing the d6-pawn and keeping all the pieces on the board. Instead, the game continued 1 a4d2? a4xd2 2 a4xd2 a4xg2 3 a4xg2 e5! (in the absence of white defenders, Black proceeds with a kingside attack) 4 a4c3?! (better was 4 a4f1 followed by a4c3, a4d2 and a4ad1, mobilizing the pieces – Ftacnik) 4...a4e6 5 a4a2 f4! 6 f3 d5! 7 a4xd5 a4xb1 c4 9 a4d2 fxg3 10 hxe3 e4! (a decisive breakthrough) 11 a4b4 a4f7 12 b6 axb6 13 axb6 a4e8 14 a4a5 a4e3+ 15 a4f2 exf3 16 exf3 a4e4! 17 a4g1 a4xf3 and White resigned.

1...a4e5 2 a4h4+ a4g6

Parrying the threat of 3 a4xf5 a4xf5 4 a4xe4.

3 a4f3 a4g5 4 a4e3

Thanks to his bishop pair White is slightly better and, in contrast to the game continuation, his king is completely safe.

Position 123
K.Urban-J.Dworakowska
European Championship,
Warsaw 2005

1 a4h5!

Intending 2 a4xf7 to swap the main defender of Black’s king.

1...a4d7

After 1...a4xc4 2 a4xf7 a4xf7 3 a4g5 White wins on the spot – Roiz.

2 a4e1!

The most methodical choice. The direct 2 a4xf7 a4xf7 3 a4xd6 was equally strong; e.g. 3...a4xc4 4 a4f4! with ideas like a4e5 and a4g5.

2...a4xc4

If 2...a4c5, then 3 a4xf7 a4xf7 4 a4g5 a4h8 5 a4e3! and the threat of 6 a4d4 decides.

3 a4xf7 a4xf7 4 a4e5!

Now in order to avoid 5 a4g7+, Black has to give up material.

4...a4xe5 5 a4xd7+ a4f8 6 a4g5

With a strong attack and an extra exchange, White is winning.

Position 124
A.Kundin-A.Rabinovich
Israeli Team Championship 2002

1 a4b5!

Intending 2 a4c6 to swap off the fianchettoed bishop.

1...a4h6?

1...a4h7 was preferable, connecting the rooks, although after 2 a4c6 a4c8 3 a4xb7+ a4xb7 4 a4d2 White wins the d6-pawn with a decisive advantage.

2 a4c6 a6

Or 2...a4g6 3 a4xd6!, with the idea 3...a4xd6 4 a4xd6 a4xd6 5 a4xb7+ a4xb7 6 a4c8 mate – Kundin.

3 a4xb7+ a4xb7 4 a4xd6 a4d7 5 a4c4

With an extra exchange and a strong attack, White won without any problems.

Position 125
J.Hellsten-P.Vernersson
Norrköping 1998

1 a4d2!

Preparing a4g5 in order to eliminate the defender on f6, and simultaneously creating the threat of 2 a4f4, winning the exchange.

1...a4a6

If Black tries to avoid the bishop exchange by 1...a4a3 2 a4g5 a4g7, then 3 a4b1! with the double threat of 4 a4b3 and 4 a4xb7.
2 \( \text{Ng5} \text{ Nxg5} \)

After 2...\( \text{Nd5} \) 3 \( \text{Nxd5 exd5} \) 4 \( \text{Wf4! Ng5} \)
\( \text{Nxf5} \) 6 \( \text{e7} \) White enjoys a strong attack.

3 \( \text{Wxg5} \text{ Nf5} \) 4 \( \text{hxg6 hxg6} \) 5 \( \text{g4} \)

Dislodging the knight to gain access to the h6-square.

5...\( \text{a7} \) 6 \( \text{Wh6} \) 7 \( \text{h2} \)

Simpler than 7 \( \text{g5?!} \) \( \text{Wf4} \).

7...\( \text{a4} \) 8 \( \text{h1} \) 9 \( \text{f8} \) \( \text{de1} \)

In view of the inevitable 10 \( \text{Wh8+} \), Black resigned.

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**Position 127**

**V.Korchnoi-M.Taimanov**

USSR Championship, Riga 1958

1...\( \text{Wg5} \)

Forking the enemy queen and knight in order to force a queen exchange, thus pre-empting a potential white attack. Also interesting is 1...\( \text{a6} \)!, swapping the attacker on d3.

2 \( \text{Wxg5} \text{ hxg5} \) 3 \( \text{g3} \text{ a6} \)

The exchange of bishops will make the e5-pawn more vulnerable.

4 \( \text{Nxa6} \text{ bxa6} \) 5 \( \text{dxe4} \)

Preferable was 5 \( \text{c4} \text{ d5} \) 6 \( \text{d1} \text{ a7} \) 7 \( \text{xd5!} \) exd5 8 \( \text{d3} \) with chances for a draw.

5...\( \text{xd5} \) 6 \( \text{Wxg5} \) 7 \( \text{xe5} \)

Thanks to his sounder pawn structure Black is better in the endgame.

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**Position 128**

**J.Timman-L.Ljubojevic**

Tilburg 1981

1 \( \text{Wc6} \)

Preparing 2 \( \text{e5} \) to swap the attacker on c7.

1...\( \text{bxc6} \)

After 1...\( \text{Wxc6} \)!, 2 \( \text{c1} \text{ d7} \) 3 \( \text{d4} \), followed by 4 \( \text{f1d1} \), the d5-pawn turns into a problem for Black. As for the unexpected 1...\( \text{g5} \)!, White could react by 2 \( \text{e5} \) \text{bxc6} 3 \( \text{c1} \) with pressure on the c6-pawn.

2 \( \text{e5} \) 3 \( \text{Wxe7} \)

The intermediate 3 \( \text{Wd4} \)!, followed by 4 \( \text{xc7} \), might have been more precise.

3...\( \text{Wxc7} \) 4 \( \text{Wd4} \text{ a8} \) 5 \( \text{Wd6} \)

Parrying the threats of 6 \( \text{b5} \) and 6 \( \text{xd5} \).

6 \( \text{c5} \)

Thanks to the eternal weakness on c6, White keeps a slight advantage.
Position 129
E.Lobron-K.Hulak
Yerevan Olympiad 1996

1..\(\text{We2!}\)

Preparing a queen exchange in order to finish off White’s attack.

2 \(\text{Wh4} \text{Wg4! 3 Wxg4}\)

Or 3 \(\text{Wf2?! Cd3, heading for f4 with}\)

strong counterplay.

3...\(\text{Xg4} 4 \text{Gg3 Ce5}\)

Now Black is simply better thanks to his extra pawn. Without queens on the board, White’s kingside attack is unlikely to succeed.

5 h4 \(\text{Ac8} 6 \text{h5 Ce2} 7 \text{h6 g6}\)

Preparing ...\(\text{Cfd7 with a better game.}\)

Position 130
T.Narmontas-V.Sergeev
Warsaw (rapid) 2007

1...\(\text{Xxe4 2 Wxe4 Wd5!}\)

Forcing a queen exchange that will finish off White’s attack once and for all.

3 \(\text{Xxd5 cxd5 4 ghx6 gxh6 5 Gg1 Kh7}\)

Preparing ...\(\text{Cg8, with a slight edge for}\)

Black thanks to his sounder pawn structure.

Position 131
M.Illescas Cordoba-O.Korneev
Spanish Team Championship 2004

1...\(\text{Axe4!}\)

Swapping off the dangerous knight before it enters at f6. 1...\(\text{Ad8?! is less advisable due to}\) 2 \(\text{Af6+!}\), when 2...\(\text{Xxf6} 3 \text{Xxf6 leaves Black without a defence against}\) 4 \(\text{Wh6.}\)

2 \(\text{Xxe4 Ad8} 3 \text{Ac3 f5?!}\)

Black is ready to alter the pawn structure in order to get some counterplay.

4 \(\text{Cc2}\)

Or 4 \(\text{Xf6 Xxf6, with ...Xd7-d2 as a plan.}\)

4...\(\text{Gg6} 5 \text{g3 f8}\)

With both white bishops being restricted, Black has no major problems in the endgame.

6 \(\text{Ad1 Xd1} 7 \text{Xxd1 Cc7} 8 \text{Xxd8 Xxd8}\)

Intending ...\(\text{Cc6-d4} with counterplay.\)

Position 132
O.Kinnmark-M.Tal
Stockholm 1961

1 \(\text{Cc7!}\)

Forcing a queen exchange in order to neutralize Black’s attack and transpose to an endgame with extra material.

1...\(\text{Xf4}\)

Or 1...\(\text{Xc7} 2 d6+ and White reaches his goal.\)

2 d6+ \(\text{Xh8}\)

After 2...\(\text{Xe6?! 3 Cc3 Xc4 4 Xc8 Xc8}\)

5 \(\text{Xx4 White is winning – Kinnmark.}\)

3 \(\text{Gg3 Xh3} 4 \text{Wxc8 Xc8} 5 \text{Xh2 Ad7} 6\)

\(\text{Cc2! e4}\)

Black gives up a pawn to prevent \(\text{Xe2-b8 with further simplifications.}\)

7 \(\text{Xxe4 Je5+ 8 Gg1}\)

Not 8 \(\text{Xg2? Xxe4 9 Xxe4 Ac6 and}\)

Black recovers the exchange.

8...\(\text{Axe4 9 Xxe4 Xd6} 10 \text{Ad1 Axf5 11 A.e6!}\)

Forcing favourable exchanges.

11...\(\text{Xe6} 12 \text{Xe6 Xf8} 13 \text{Xa6}\)

White is winning.

Position 133
J.Gustafsson-Z.Gyimesi
Internet (blitz) 2006

1 \(\text{Gg4!}\)

Swapping off the powerful bishop on h3. Less appealing is 1 \(\text{Ae1?! Wh6! 2 Af3}\)

\(\text{Gg5 with an initiative for Black.}\)

1...\(\text{Xf1?}\)
Correct was 1...exg4 2 \textit{wxg4} g6 avoiding any problem with 3 \textit{c3f5}, which can now be met by 3...\textit{we6}.

2 \textit{xex8} \textit{cxc8} 3 \textit{wxf1}?

The intermediate 3 \textit{c3f5}! won on the spot; e.g. 3...\textit{we6} 4 \textit{wxc4} g6 5 \textit{c3e7}+.

3...\textit{wd7} 4 \textit{f3} \textit{d6} 5 \textit{a3} \textit{f5} 6 \textit{wd3} \textit{xd4} 7 \textit{wxd4}

White has a more active game.

\textbf{Position 134}

\textbf{J.Ambroz-F.Gheorghiu}

Baile Herculean 1982

1...\textit{d7}!

Securing the exchange of at least one of the attackers on e5 and g5. 1...\textit{xc3} 2 bxc3 \textit{cxe4} is less convincing due to 3 \textit{xe4} \textit{xe4} (not 3...\textit{exg5}? 4 f4! \textit{xe4} 5 fxg5 with a strong attack) 4 \textit{xe7} \textit{wxe7} 5 \textit{cfe1} and White keeps the initiative.

2 \textit{xe7}

After 2 \textit{h6}? \textit{cxe5} 3 dxe5 \textit{xc3} Black achieves favourable exchanges.

2...\textit{wxe7} 3 \textit{c4} \textit{g7}

Avoiding 3...\textit{xc5}! 4 dxe5 with interesting destinies for the white knight on d6 and f6.

4 a3 \textit{c5f6} 5 \textit{g3} \textit{wd6}

Also possible was 5...\textit{ed8}, avoiding White’s next move.

6 \textit{wh6+}! \textit{g8} 7 \textit{xf4} \textit{we7}

Black has no problems.

\textbf{Position 135}

\textbf{H.Groetz-A.Rychagov}

Agios Kirykos 2009

1...\textit{xc3}!

Preparing a “defensive” bishop exchange on a4. In the game Rychagov preferred 1...\textit{ac8}, when 2 \textit{dxe4}! \textit{wc7} 3 \textit{c5} would have yielded White some initiative.

2 \textit{bxc3} \textit{a4} 3 \textit{d3}

3 \textit{xe7}+!? \textit{xe7} 4 \textit{wxc4} \textit{g5} 5 \textit{e2} f6! leads to perpetual check; e.g. 6 \textit{g3} \textit{f5} 7 \textit{f5}+! \textit{xf5} 8 \textit{h6}+ \textit{h7} 9 \textit{g5}+! \textit{g8} – Baburin.

3...\textit{xc2} 4 \textit{wxc2} \textit{d7}!

Challenging the strong knight on e5.

5 \textit{h3} \textit{g6} 6 \textit{f4} \textit{cxe5} 7 \textit{fxc5} \textit{wc6}

Black has no major problems; e.g. 8 \textit{cd2}? f6 9 \textit{wh6} \textit{c7}, easily repelling the attack.

\textbf{Position 136}

\textbf{B.Predojevic-E.Dearing}

Calvia Olympiad 2004

1...\textit{xf4} 2

Swapping the powerful bishop, which is vital for White’s attack. Instead, the game continued 1...\textit{d6}? 2 \textit{d4}! \textit{xf4} 3 \textit{xf4} \textit{ed3} 4 \textit{b3}! (heading for a5) 4...\textit{f6}?! 5 \textit{h5} \textit{xf4} 6 \textit{xf4} \textit{c5} \textit{g5} (or 6...\textit{c6} 7 \textit{xc6} \textit{bxc6} 8 \textit{wa6}+ with mate) 7 \textit{xb7}+ \textit{c8} 8 \textit{wa6} and Black resigned in view of the inevitable \textit{a5}-c6+. Also dubious is 1...\textit{d3}?! 2 \textit{b3} \textit{wc6} 3 \textit{d1} with a strong initiative.

2 \textit{xf3} \textit{wc6} 3 \textit{b2} \textit{wc7}

White does not have sufficient compensation for the pawn – Erenburg.

\textbf{Position 137}

\textbf{R.Teichmann-O.Bernstein}

St. Petersburg 1909

1 \textit{f2}!

Swapping the active enemy bishop in order to seize the long diagonal with the queen.

1...\textit{xf2}

After 1...\textit{c5}? 2 \textit{c6} the bishop leaves the board under worse conditions; e.g. 2...\textit{c6} 3 \textit{xf6} \textit{xf6} 4 \textit{c3+} with a strong attack.

2 \textit{xf2} \textit{wa5} 3 \textit{we2}! \textit{f6} 4 \textit{wb2} \textit{h4}
Black is just one move from dislodging the knight by ...c7-c6; however...

5 g4! h6

White’s idea was to meet 5...c6 by 6
\( \text{gx}f6! \text{gx}f6 7 \text{g}5.

6 h4 g5 7 f4!

Insisting on the g4-g5 idea.

7...gxh4 8 \( \text{gx}f6! \text{g}7 9 \text{g}5

White has a decisive attack.

\(^{Position\ 138}\)

**V. Milov-V. Kotronias**

Gibraltar 2009

1 \( \text{xd}4! 

Eliminating Black’s most active piece, after which his undeveloped queenside will become more notable. 1 \( \text{ad}1?! \text{c}2 was less convincing.

1...\( \text{xd}4 2 \text{ae}1 \text{e}3 3 \text{f}4!

With the double threat of 4 \( \text{xd}4 and 4 \( \text{e}4.

3...\( \text{d}8 4 \text{h}3

The simple 4 \( \text{d}1!? looks strong as well.

4...\( c3

The prophylactic 4...\( h8 can be met by 5
\( e4 g6 6 \text{wh}6! \text{g}7 7 \text{wxg}7+! \text{wxg}7 8 f6+ \text{wx}f6 9 \text{gx}f6 and White wins – Scherbakov.

5 \( e4! \text{w}f6 6 \text{xe}3

With the decisive threat of 7 \( e8+. White won just a few moves later.

\(^{Position\ 139}\)

**M. Flores Rios-J. Hellsten**

Santiago 2006

1 \( \text{dc}1!

Trying to exchange, or at least dislodge the active black rook.

1...\( \text{d}2

Or 1...\( xc1 2 \( xc1 \text{d}6 3 \text{a}4!, heading for c5 or b6, when 3...\( xf4? fails to 4 \( xf4.

2 \( \text{c}4 \text{d}3 3 \text{b}5!

The game instead continued 3 \( e5? \( xa3 4 \text{c}4 \text{h}5 with complications. By 3 b5 White just sends his passed pawns forward with a clear advantage.

\(^{Position\ 140}\)

**F. Urkedal-J. Hammer**

Norwegian Championship, Bergen 2009

1 \( c5?

A bad decision since the white rook was far more active than its black counterpart. Besides, the pawn structure now becomes damaged. The tempting 1 \( c7?! leads nowhere after 1...\( xe5 2 fxe5 \( d5, but 1 a4! was a much stronger option, when both 1...\( xa4? 2 \text{c}8+ \text{f}8 3 \text{d}7 and 1...\( xb4 2 a5 \( xe5 3 \text{xb}6! \text{xb}6 4 \text{fxe}5 win material for White. Thus Black should prefer 1...\( d5 2 a5 \text{d}7 3 \text{c}7! \text{xe}5 4 \text{fxe}5 \text{b}5 5 \text{xe}7 with just a slight edge for White – Baburin.

1...\( xc5 2 bxc5 \( a4 3 \text{d}3

Perhaps White had planned 3 \( c6 and only now realized that 3...\( xe5 leaves Black with a sound extra pawn after 4 fxe5 bxc6.

3...\( b2!

Forcing the exchange of White’s more active minor piece.

4 \( \text{xb}2 \text{xb}2

With the idea of 5 \( d3 and 6...\( f7-e6-d5. Black soon won.

\(^{Position\ 141}\)

**M. Savic-R. Fontaine**

Serbian Team Championship 2005

1 \( f1!

Swapping the light-squared bishops in order to gain access to the c4 and c6 squares. Less convincing is 1 \( c8?! \( xc8 2 \( xc8 \text{c}5 3 \text{xe}5 \text{xe}4 with equality.

1...\( xf1 2 \text{xf1} \text{c}5 3 \text{c}4
As a result of the bishop exchange, the a4-pawn has become exposed.

3...\g7 4 \c1!

Preparing \e3 to eliminate the defender on c5.

4...f5 5 exf5 gxf5 6 \e3 \c8 7 h5!

Vacating the h4-square for the knight.

7...e4?! 

This loses a pawn. More prudent was 7...\f6 8 \b4 \c6 with chances for a draw.

8 \h4 \b2 9 \xf5 \f8 10 g4 \xa3 11 \xc5 \xc5 12 \xa4

With a sound extra pawn White won.

Position 142
J.Leira-D.Cruz
Compostela 1993

1 \e1!

Seizing the open file and eyeing the weak e5-square. White doesn't fear the exchange on d3 since the knight is Black's most active piece.

In the game he unnecessarily safeguarded his bishop by 1 \c2? and after 1...\e6 2 \d2 f4! Black achieved some counterplay by attacking the g5-pawn.

1...\xd3

Or 1...\e6 2 \d2 f4 3 \e5!, followed by \a1 with a strong initiative – Zlotnik. The 3 \e5! move is the one that White didn't have time to play in the game, due to the tempo loss caused by 1 \c2?.

2 \xd3 f4 3 \e5!

Preventing ...\f5 and preparing \a1 with a better game, thanks to the control of the e-file and the superior knight.

Position 144
P.Wolff-J.Fedorowicz
US Championship, Los Angeles 1991

1 \f2!

An excellent decision. By swapping the active enemy queen White avoids an attack and transposes to a superior endgame.

1...\xf2 2 \xf2 \xd3 3 \xd3

Despite the opposite-coloured bishops, White has a significant advantage since his bishop is much stronger.

3...\d8

Or 3...0-0 4 \c2! \xc2 5 \xc2 \c8+ 6 \b3 axb2 7 \b1! and there soon emerges a dangerous passed pawn on the a-file.

4 \c2 \xc2 5 \xc2 axb2 6 \b1! \e7

Equally unsatisfactory is 6...\b6 7 \xb2 \c5 8 a3! or 6...\g8 7 \g3 \h5 8 \xb2 \h4 9 \xb4 \xg3 10 \xg3 \xg3 11 \b7 – Wolff.

7 \xb2 \a5 8 \b3!

With the strong threat of 9 \a4, winning the b4-pawn. White later won.
Position 145

V.Hort-L.Popov

Varna 1969

1...g3!

Avoiding pieces exchanges in order to keep the enemy position cramped. In contrast, after 1...h6 xe4! 2 xe4 d7 or 1...f4 xe4 2 xe4 exf4 3 xf4 d7, followed by ...wb6(c7), Black completes development and connect his rooks with a decent game.

1...d7

If 1...d7, White can choose between the simple 2 f4 exf4 3 xf4, followed by ae1, and the more concrete 2...xe5? dxe5 d6.

2...h6

Creating some additional pressure before going f2-f4.

2...h4 3 e4 f6 4 f4!

A strong blow that exploits the lack of coordination in Black’s camp.

4...xe4 5 xe4 exf4 6 xf4 g8

Parrying the threat of 7 xg6, but White’s greater piece activity proves decisive anyway.

7 f3! e8 8 af1! xe4 9 xg7 h8 10 h5+

In view of 10...gxh5 11 f7+ h8 12 wh6 with a quick mate, Black resigned.

Position 146

A.Groszpeter-M.Suba

Kecskemét 1979

1...d5!

Eliminating the more active of White’s bishops.

2 xd5+ wxd5 3 0-0-0

Quite an unnatural place for the king, but after 3 0-0 d4 4 xd4 cxd4, followed by ...c6, the absence of the fianchettoed bishop leaves him rather unprotected on g1.

3...d4!

Seizing the centre and vacating c6 for the other knight.

4 e3 wd7 5 c3 bc6 6 b1 b5 7 df1 a5

Black has a clear initiative.

Position 147

Y.Yakovitch-M.Makarov

Russian Championship, Elista 2001

1...a1!

Turning down the rook exchange in view of his space advantage. Besides, the white rook has more prospects on a1 than its colleague on e8, such as a1-a6, attacking the b6-pawn.

1...h5

The desirable 1...a8? fails to 2 xxa8+ xxa8 3 d5.

2 f2 f4?!

Preferable was 2...h6 with a waiting game.

3 e3?!

3 xg7! was even stronger, when both 3...xg7 4 wd4+ and 3...h3+ 4 gxh3 xg7 5 wd4+ f6 6 a6 lead to a decisive advantage – Rabinovich.

3...e6 4 d5! xdx5 5 cxd5 g5 6 b5!!

Stepping up the pressure.

6...f8 7 c1 w8

At this point 8 h4 h7 9 g3! won a pawn, and most likely the game as well – Rabinovich.

Position 148

A.Karpov-J.Timman

Amsterdam 1991

1 f4!

Speeding up his development and supporting the further idea of d6. Now if Black swaps on f4, his active knight disap-
pawns and White’s remaining bishop on b3 becomes very strong.

1...\textit{W}a5?!

Indeed, after 1...\textit{Q}xf4?! 2 \textit{W}xf4 \textit{A}xe4 (other moves run into 3 \textit{Q}d6) 3 \textit{A}xe4 White is much better thanks to his strong bishop and the weakness on f7. A better try might be 1...\textit{A}xe4?! 2 \textit{A}xe4 \textit{W}a5 – Aagaard, when 3 \textit{A}d1 \textit{A}ad8 4 \textit{A}ed4 seems to keep the advantage.

2 \textit{Q}d6! \textit{A}xd6

Or 2...\textit{W}b4 3 \textit{A}xd5 cxd5 4 a3 \textit{W}xb2 5 \textit{W}xd5 with a clear edge – Karpov.

3 \textit{exd6} \textit{W}xe8?

This lets the d-pawn advance, but after 3...\textit{A}ad8 4 \textit{A}ad1 that pawn should also tell in the long run.

4 \textit{A}xe8+ \textit{A}xe8 5 \textit{A}xd5! cxd5 6 d7! \textit{A}e7

After 6...\textit{A}d8 7 \textit{W}e3! h6 8 \textit{W}e8+ \textit{A}h7 9 ba! \textit{W}b6 10 \textit{A}c1 f6 11 \textit{W}e7 the threat of 12 \textit{A}c7 decides.

7 \textit{A}c1 \textit{A}xd7 8 \textit{A}c8+ \textit{A}d8 9 ba! \textit{W}b6 10 \textit{A}c7

White is winning.

\textit{Position 149}

\textbf{D.Bronstein-M.Botvinnik}

World Championship (game 16), Moscow 1951

1...\textit{A}xf4!

Eliminating the strong knight on f4 and preparing 2...\textit{A}h5, to simplify into an ending with a good knight vs. a bad bishop.

2 \textit{exf4} \textit{A}h5! 3 \textit{W}a3

If 3 \textit{Q}g2, declining the bishop exchange, then 3...\textit{W}a8, preparing...\textit{W}a2 and...\textit{A}a8-a3 with strong pressure. Also after 3 \textit{A}xe4 dxe4, followed by...\textit{A}f3+ and...\textit{A}h5-h3, Black obtains a strong attack – Botvinnik.

3...\textit{A}xf3+ 4 \textit{exf3} \textit{A}g7

Mission accomplished; the knight clearly outshines the bishop.

5 \textit{g}2 \textit{W}d8 6 \textit{Af}1 \textit{W}f6 7 \textit{A}d3 h5!

By the threat...h5-h4, Black provokes a new weakness.

8 h4 \textit{A}g8 9 \textit{A}d1 \textit{W}g7 10 \textit{W}f3 \textit{A}h6 11 \textit{g}2 \textit{A}a8!

With 12...\textit{A}a2+ coming up, Black is clearly better.

\textit{Position 150}

\textbf{F.Berkes-R.Ducic}

Bosnian Team Championship 2002

1 \textit{Q}xd7!

Initiating favourable exchanges in order to install an eternal knight on e5.

1...\textit{W}xd7?!

Preferable was 1...\textit{A}xd7 2 \textit{Q}e5 \textit{A}f6!, followed by...\textit{A}e8 and...\textit{Q}d7 to challenge the white knight, although 3 \textit{W}c3 preparing b3-b4 keeps some advantage.

2 \textit{Q}e5 \textit{W}e7 3 \textit{A}xe4!

Swapping the last piece capable of challenging White’s knight.

3...\textit{fxe}4 4 c5

From now on White is better on the whole board, thanks to his powerful knight.

4...\textit{A}h5?! 5 \textit{g}4 \textit{A}e8 6 \textit{g}2 \textit{g}8 7 \textit{Ab}1 \textit{W}c7

8 \textit{W}d2 \textit{A}d7 9 \textit{A}fc1 \textit{A}a6 10 \textit{A}c3 \textit{A}fa8 11 \textit{h}4!

After luring the black pieces to the queenside, White takes action on the opposite flank.

11...\textit{A}b8 12 \textit{h}5 b5 13 \textit{AXB}6 \textit{A}xb6 14 \textit{W}f2

\textit{A}e8 15 \textit{h}6! \textit{g}6 16 \textit{f}5!

With a strong attack.

\textit{Position 151}

\textbf{V.Makogonov-M.Botvinnik}

Sverdlovsk 1943

1...\textit{A}xc3!

Initiating favourable exchanges in order to install an eternal knight on e4.

2 \textit{b}xc3 \textit{A}f5! 3 \textit{A}xf5 \textit{W}xf5 4 \textit{g}4 \textit{W}e6

Simplest. The tempting 4...\textit{W}e4 allows 5
a3! d3+ 6 g3 xe3+ 7 f3 with complications.

5 a3 e4+ 6 f3 h5

After 6...xc3?! 7 wb3 b5 8 b2 0-0-0 9 f5 White gets some initiative – Botvinnik.

7 h3 f6!

With focus on the enemy monarch.

8 c4 hxg4+ 9 hxg4 xh1 10 xh1 0-0-0

Thanks to his safer king and superior minor piece, Black has a clear advantage.

**Position 152**

**J.Polgar-V.Anand**

Wijk aan Zee 1998

1 xf6!

Initiating favourable exchanges in order to install an eternal knight on d5. 1 d3?!, heading for b4-d5, is less convincing due to 1...b4! 2 xf6 xf6 3 d5 xd5 4 exd5 a5 and the d5-square can no longer be exploited by White’s pieces.

1...xf6 2 d5!

Forcing the exchange of the other knight, thus eliminating the last defender of the d5-square.

2...xd5 3 xd5 c5 4 ad1!

Keeping the d5-square under control.

4...xd5 5 xd5 c8 6 c3!

Preparing c2-e3-d5 with a typical “good knight vs. bad bishop” scenario. For the continuation of this game, see example 29 in the section about improving the knight.

**Position 153**

**S.Kudrin-M.Cebalo**

Titograd 1984

1...g5!

Swapping the active bishop on h6, as a first step to a future position with good knight vs. bad bishop.

2 xg5 xg5 3 e3

If 3 d4, then 3...xd5! 4 exd5 c4, heading for e3.

3...c4 4 xc4 xc4 5 a1f2 e5 6 h1 xb3!

This exchange further emphasizes the inferiority of White’s bishop.

7 cxb3 e7 8 b4?!

Preferable was 8 wd5 wxd5 9 exd5 with just a slight disadvantage – Cebalo. In the game Black achieves a strong rook manoeuvre.

8...c4! 9 b3 d4 10 e1 d5! 11 f1 dxe4

Having a sound extra pawn, Black won without any difficulties.

**Position 154**

**V.Colin-D.Berczes**

Brno 2006

1...b4!

Intending 2...xc3 and 3...b5 with favourable exchanges, after which the knight can be installed on e4, where it will clearly outshine the remaining white bishop.

2 g3

Creating the threat of 3 h6. Less constructive is 2 a3?! xc3 3 xc3 b5 with the knight soon landing on e4.

2...h8 3 xe8+

3 g5! was preferable, interfering with Black’s plan; for example, 3...xe1 4 xe1 e4! 5 xe4 dxe4 6 d5! xd5 7 f6 g6 8 d1 xc3 9 xc3 we6 10 b3 with compensation for the pawn – Berczes.

3...xe8 4 wh4?!

Again 4 g5 was better, although after 4...e4 5 xe4 dxe4 Black keeps the upper hand.

4...xc3 5 bxc3 b5! 6 xb5 wb5 7 g5 de4

Mission accomplished, with a clear positional advantage. There followed 8 f6 g6 9
\[ \text{White:} \text{h6?! g8 10 f3wb1+ 11 c1 g5! 12 f1 xc3 and Black soon won.} \]

**Position 155**

**C. Pedersen - E. Mortensen**

Danish Team Championship 2009

1. \[ \text{xc6!} \]

Creating weaknesses on c5 and c6. 1 \[ \text{xc5?!} \] is less precise due to 1...d4! 2 wc3 db5.

1...bxc6

Or 1...\[ \text{xc6} \] 2 wc6 bxc6 3 db5 with a superior endgame, reminiscent of the encounter P. Benko - S. Reshevsky, US Championship, New York 1968.

2 wc3 db8 3 db5

White already has the better chances thanks to his strong knight and the sad bishop on c8.

3...f6 4 Rae1 wb7 5 a4 d8 6 a5 d5 7 b4!

Fixing the knight.

7...e5?! 8 fxe5 fxe5 9 db3

Now the e5-pawn is doomed, and White soon won the game.

**Position 156**

**F. Gheorghiu - T. Ghitescu**

Bucharest 1966

1. \[ \text{xe6?} \]

A bad idea since Black won’t obtain anything in return for the multiple weaknesses. 1...d7 was preferable, heading for e5 or b6, after which the bishop could settle on e6 or a6.

2 \[ \text{xe6 fxe6 3 e3 db8} \]

Or 3...a5 4 b3 a4 5 xxa4 xxe4 6 ac1 with a huge advantage.

4 b3 db7 5 db1 db7 6 f3 xxc7 7 db4

After locating his pieces on ideal squares, White starts exploiting the opponent’s weaknesses.

7...xc8 8 f2 e5 9 c2 cc7?

After 9...d6 10 db2, heading for c4, Black is also suffering, but the text loses material.

10 dc1 db8 11 db5 12 xxe5+ xe5 14 db4 etc.

12 a4 db4 13 de3

Black resigned.

**Position 157**

**J. Piket - L. Oll**

Manila Olympiad 1992

1. \[ \text{xf3!} \]

A timely exchange that damages White’s pawn structure and secures the f4-square for the knight.

2 gxf3

Obviously 2 xf4? loses the exchange after 2...xd1.

2...g5+!

Exploiting the mating threat in order to swap the active white queen as well.

3 xg5 hxg5 4 a4 xb8

Heading for b4 to intimidate the bishop and protect the c4-pawn.

5 ed2 db4 6 b1

Or 6 c6 db6 7 d5 xd5! with a clear edge – Oll. Here 8 xd5 is met by 8...xd6.

6 db5 db7 7 df8 c2 db7

The passed pawn has been neutralized, while the white rooks lack active prospects. Next Black may consider ...db8 and ...d3 to put pressure on b2.

**Position 158**

**A. Kotov - G. Levenfish**

USSR Championship, Moscow 1949

1 wb4!

Swapping the black queen to enable c2-c7. The isolated doubled pawns are less
relevant. In contrast, after 1...c1?! d6 2 c7 c8 Black has no problems, e.g. 3 axa6 cxc7 4 wxc7 wa1+ 5 f1 b5.

1...wd4

After 1...wd6? 2 c4! White wins a pawn.

2 exd4 g5?

This lets White seize the seventh rank. 2...c8? 3 exb8 axb8 4 axa6 was equally bad, but by 2...d6 3 c7 b5! 4 xe7 f8 5 c7 c8! Black could have neutralized the active white rook with drawing chances.

3 c7 b5

Or 3...d6 4 xxd7 gfx4 5 xe7 d8 6 a7 etc.

4 xb7 gxf4 5 xe7 c8 6 xb5 axb5 7 h4!

Clearing a path for the king. With an extra pawn, more active rook and a strong passed pawn, White soon won.


Position 159

D.Bronstein-S.Tartakower
Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1948

1 h5!

Preparing 2 xg6+ with further damage to Black’s pawn structure.

1...xe3

After 1...xh5? 2 wxh5+ g6 3 xe5 White recovers the pawn with a clear edge, while 1...wd6?! runs into 2 e4 we6 3 c5.

2 xg6+ hxg6 3 fxe3 d3 4 wfd3 e6 5 we4!

Transposing to an endgame where the knight will clearly outshine the bishop.

5...we4

Or 5...0-0-0 6 xd3 xd3 7 w2 with similar play.

6 xe4 e7 7 e2 d3 8 a1 0-0

If 8...d5??, then 9 c4.

9 xd8 xd8 10 f1 b6

Or 10...f8? 11 d1! d8 12 xd8+ xd8 13 c5.

11 f2!

Focusing on the c6-pawn.

11...d5 12 d3 f6 13 d4

Intending 13...d6 14 d1 to force the exchange of rooks. Despite the minus pawn only White can win this, and he later managed to do so.


Position 160

C.Lutz-V.Bologan
German Team Cup 1994

1...g5!

Forcing a “dynamic” exchange that will severely damage White’s pawn structure. 1...e5?! 2 dxex5 dxex5 3 d3 is less convincing, but 1...d5!? deserves attention.

2 d3

After 2 g2?? g4 the bishop is trapped.

2...xd3! 3 exd3 wa4 4 wd2 h6

Black is now considerably better due to the weak doubled pawns and the stronghold on d5.

5 a1 d5 6 g2

At this point the simplest was 6...c5!? 7 xd5 exd5 8 wd1 cxd4 followed by ...b5-c3 – Bologan.


Position 161

M.Botvinnik-N.Sorokin
USSR Championship, Moscow 1931

1 we3!

Challenging the piece that sustains Black’s position. The doubled pawns are less of a concern.

1...xe3

Both 1...c7? 2 xe5! xe5 3 xb6 xe4 4 we3! and 1...bd7? 2 xc5 xc5 3 xe5 exe4 4 exe4 exe4 5 e2!, followed by 6 g6, win for White.

2 xe3

In the absence of his queen, Black has a problem with the e5-pawn and with the a4-
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a5 threat.
2...\texttt{g4} 3 a5 \texttt{c8}

Or 3...\texttt{bd7} 4 h3 \texttt{xf3} 5 gxf3 \texttt{c5} 6 b4 \texttt{e6} 7 \texttt{xe6! fxe6} 8 \texttt{a4!}, followed by \texttt{c5} – Botvinnik.

4 \texttt{c1} \texttt{xf3}?! 

Probably 4...\texttt{e8} was a lesser evil; e.g. 5 h3 \texttt{h5} 6 \texttt{h4} \texttt{e7} 7 g4 \texttt{g6} with more resistance than in the game.

5 \texttt{xf3} \texttt{e7} 6 \texttt{d5! \texttt{c6}}

Giving up the seventh rank, but after 6...\texttt{fxd5} 7 \texttt{xd5! \texttt{d5} 8 exd5! \texttt{ac8} 9 \texttt{dc2} Black is also in trouble.

7 \texttt{xf6+ gxf6} 8 \texttt{d7!} \texttt{ab8}

Or 8...\texttt{xa5} 9 \texttt{cc7} with fatal consequences.

9 \texttt{f2}

Preparing 10 \texttt{g1+} with a clear advantage.

Position 162
S. Atalik–J. Hellsten
Greek Team Championship 2003

1 \texttt{c6+ e7} 2 \texttt{d4!}

After depriving Black of castling, White exploits the dynamic force of his doubled pawns in order to triple on the d-file. 1 \texttt{d4!? 0-0} 2 \texttt{ad1} was equally strong.

2...\texttt{d6}

Not 2...\texttt{xd4?} 3 \texttt{cxd4}, repairing White’s pawn structure, while 2...\texttt{e5?!} 3 \texttt{d5} surrenders the d5-square.

3 \texttt{g2!}

If 3 \texttt{f3?!} then 3...\texttt{g5!}, forcing a queen exchange. In the game 3...\texttt{g5} would run into 4 \texttt{f4}.

3...\texttt{hd8} 4 \texttt{ad1 \texttt{a4}?}

Exposing the king. Preferable was 4...\texttt{ed7} 5 \texttt{c6 \texttt{d6} 6 \texttt{wd2} e5 7 \texttt{d5 \texttt{xd5} 8 \texttt{xd5!} (or 8 \texttt{cxd5 \texttt{wd6} with a blockade) 8...\texttt{f8} with just a slight white edge – Atalik.

5 \texttt{xd6! \texttt{xd6} 6 \texttt{xd6 \texttt{e4} 7 \texttt{e4! \texttt{xc3} 8 \texttt{c6+ \texttt{e5} 9 \texttt{d7!}

Preventing 9...\texttt{wd8} with counterplay.

9...\texttt{xe2+}

After 9...\texttt{g5} 10 \texttt{d3} or 9...\texttt{f5} 10 \texttt{f4+ \texttt{f6} 11 \texttt{d4} White also wins – Atalik.

10 \texttt{f1 \texttt{d4} 11 \texttt{c7+! \texttt{f5} 12 \texttt{f4+ \texttt{g6} 13 \texttt{e4+ \texttt{f5} 14 \texttt{g4 1-0}

Position 163
J. Hellsten–M. Johansson
Malmö 2001

1 \texttt{f4!}

Initiating a central advance to gain space and exploit the location of Black’s king in the centre. 1 \texttt{b1?! h4} 2 \texttt{e4 \texttt{h5} is somewhat less powerful.

1...\texttt{wa5} 2 \texttt{c2!}

By keeping the queens on White ensures the e3-e4 advance and enhances a future attack.

2...\texttt{c6}

This doesn’t help Black, but he was short of good options anyway. Obviously 2...\texttt{d5?} failed to 3 \texttt{e1}.

3 \texttt{e4 \texttt{wa4} 4 \texttt{e2! \texttt{ae8} 5 \texttt{e5 dxe5} 6 \texttt{fxe5 \texttt{d7} 7 \texttt{h4+ f6} 11 \texttt{d4} with the strong threat of 9 \texttt{f2}.

8 \texttt{xf6+ gxf6} 9 \texttt{c2 \texttt{wa5} 10 \texttt{d5}

With a decisive attack.

Position 164
T. Shaked–T. Bildt
Berlin 1997

1 \texttt{g4!}

Gaining some space on the kingside, before Black achieves the same thing by 1...\texttt{h5}.

1...\texttt{g6} 2 \texttt{a3 \texttt{d6}

Or 2...\texttt{e7} 3 \texttt{h4! \texttt{h5} 4 \texttt{g5 \texttt{e8} 5 \texttt{b4 \texttt{a8} 6 \texttt{e4!}, exploiting the absence of a knight on
f6, with a strong initiative.

3...h5

White is also better after 3...h6 4 a3xd6 a3xd6 5 e4, preparing g4-g5.

4 a3xd6 a3xd6 5 g5 e8 6 e4 c7?

This leads to a bad structure. 6...e5 is sounder, when White could consider 7 a3d1, followed by e3-e4 and a3e3.

7 a3xg6 fxg6 8 a3d3 e7 9 e2!

The other knight “inherits” the f4-square, where it will eye the weak pawn on g6.

9...e5 10 dxe5+ a3xe5 11 e4

White wins a pawn with a huge advantage.

Position 166

J.R. Capablanca-D. Janowski
St. Petersburg 1914

1 a3b1!

Preparing a pawn storm on the queenside with b2-b4 and a2-a4. 1 a3?! is less precise, since after 1...f6 2 b4 f7 White will have to spend one more tempo protecting the b-pawn before he can push a3-a4.

1...f6 2 b4 f7 3 a4 a3xf3!

Swapping a potential attacker. After 3...e6! 4 b5 cxb5 5 axb5 a5 6 b6! White’s attack accelerates.

4 a3xf3 b6?!

4...b5! seems preferable, followed by 5...b7 and 5...a8.

5 a3b5 cxb5 6 a3xb5 a5 7 a3d5 a3c5 8 c4!

Reinforcing the knight and preparing a3c3, d3-d4 and c4-c5 with a further attack.

8...g5 9 a3f2 e6 10 a3c3 a3d7 11 a3d1

Avoiding 11 a3d2? a3xd5! 12 a3xd5 a3xe3+ 13 a3h1 a3c5 when Black is out of danger.

11...b7 12 d4 a3d6 13 a3c2!

Now the breakthrough c4-c5 is inevitable. The game continued 13...exd4 14 exd4 a4f4 15 c5 a3xd5 16 exd5 a3xd5 17 c6+ and White won.

Position 167

U. Andersson-N. Spiridonov
Sochi 1973

1...c4!

Initiating a central advance.

1...a3d7 2 e4 b5 3 a3c3

An excellent diagonal in the absence of a bishop on g7.

3...bxc4 4 a3bxc4 a3b8 5...a3ab1

The immediate 5 e5!? was also interesting.

5...a3c7 6 a3h3! a3b6

Or 6...a3f6 7 a3be1, preparing a4-e5.
7 b3 a8

The more active 7...a4 8 wxc2 w5? fails to 9 a3 b4 10 d7! – Andersson.

8 f6 b8 9 e5?!.

Another good option was 9 xb6 xb6 10 a5! xd5 11 wc7 xc7 12 b7 with a superior endgame.

9...xb8 10 e6!

Softening up Black’s light squares.

10...f6 11 d5 b4 12 a3 xb3 13 xb3 xb3 14 xb3 db6? 14...wb6! 15 wa4 df8 was mandatory – Andersson.

15 h4!

Opening a new front on the kingside, where Black is short of defenders. There followed 15...f8 16 h2 d8 17 f5! d8?! 18 fxg6 hxg6 19 wc2 c8 20 wg6 and the h-pawn soon decided.

Position 168
J.Hellsten-P.Sinkovics
Gyula 2002

1 g4!

Gaining some space and enabling a future attack.

1...h6?

This just helps White in opening lines towards the black king. After 1...g5 2 h5! w8xh5 3 gxh5, followed by e3-e4, he manages the same thing, therefore 1...e6 was safer, preparing to meet 2 g5 by 2...d7.

2 h4 c4?!

Too slow. For better or worse Black had to play 2...g5 in order to stop g4-g5.

3 g5 hxg5 4 hxg5 h7

Or 4...e3x2? 5 axe3 e3 6 g6f6 wxf6 7 od5 w6h6+ 8 wh2 etc.

5 axh7+! xh7 6 h2+ g8 7 e4

Even stronger was 7 wd3! wxg5 (or 7...g6 8 xg6) 8 wh7+ f8 9 e4.

7...exe4 8 fxe4 we7

After 8...exe4 9 wh5 or 8...wxg5 9 og1 the attack is irresistible.

9 wh5 exe4+ 10 og2 f5 11 gxf6

Black resigned.

Position 169
F.Gheorghiu-I.Radulov
Budapest 1970

1 b4!

Preparing a2-a4 and b4-b5 to gain some space and harass the active bishop on a6. 1 e4?! is less appropriate due to 1...dxe4 2 dxe4 dxe4 3 axe4 d6f6!, hitting d4 and preparing to meet 4 xc6 by 4...xc8.

1...xc8 2 a4 dxc4

2...c5 3 dxc5 bxc5 4 b5 ab7 seems more natural, when 5 ab2 wc7 6 ffd1 preserves a slight white advantage.

3 dxc4 xc4

Since 3...c5? fails to 4 b5, Black first gets rid of the bishop.

4 dxc4 c5 5 dxc5 bxc5 6 b5!

Creating a potential passed pawn.

10...b6 7 wc2 cfd5 8 a5 c4

8...c4 9 de5 c4 was more active, although after 10 we2 d6d5 11 a3 White keeps the initiative.

9 dxb4 cxb4 10 xc6! d5 11 d1 wc7 12 ab2

Intending 13 e4 with better chances thanks to the queenside dominance.

Position 170
A.Khalifman-O.Romanishin
Ischia 1996 (analysis variation)

1 g4!

Gaining some space and bothering the knight on f6. Less promising is 1 e4?! zb8, preparing ...xc8 and ...c5.

1...ed8

Vacating the e8-square for the knight.
1...e4? drops a pawn to 2 g5, while after 1...h6?! 2 h4 the h-file is soon opened to White’s benefit.

2 g5 e8 3 e4 b8 4 f4!

Clearing some more space. Also interesting is 4 h4?!, followed by h4-h5.

4...exf4

Parrying f4-f5 at the cost of unblocking the long diagonal. If 4...f5?!, then 5 gxf6 gxf6 6 wd1 with a strong attack.

5 exf4 c8 6 c3! c5 7 xc5 dx5 8 b2 f6

Forced, in view of the threat 9 xe8+.

9 gxf6 xf6 10 g3 wf7 11 d3

With excellent attacking prospects.

Position 171

A.Kushnir-N.Gaprindashvili

World Women’s Championship (game 8), Riga 1972

1 b5!

Opening a new front on the queenside in order to exhaust the defence. 1...e7 wg7 is less constructive.

1...axb5

Or 1...xb5 2 c6! xc6 3 xc6 bxc6 4 d7, winning a piece and the game.

2 c6! bxc6 3 a3

Now the threat of 4 a7 puts an end to Black’s resistance.

3...a8 4 xa8 wxa8 5 d8!

Exploiting the temporary absence of the black queen, White creates a mating net. In view of 6 wf6+, Black resigned.

Position 172

V.Kotrotsos-A.Mastrovasilis

Greek Team Championship 2005

1...g5!

Gaining some space and reinforcing the e5-square for the knight.

2 0-0-0 f7 3 he1

3 h4!? seems preferable, taking up the kingside battle.

3...h5!

Preparing ...h5-h4 with a further grip on the dark squares. Now White’s bishop is slowly turning into a “bad” one.

4 wc3 xe3+ 5 xe3 e5 6 f1 h4! 7 xd8+ xd8 8 b3 e7

Thanks to his more active pieces and kingside control, Black has a more comfortable endgame. The game saw 9 a4 b6 10 b2 c5 11 c3 a5! (arranging all the pawns on the “right” colour and enabling the ...a5-a4 pinprick) 12 c2 g8 13 d2 a8 14 b5 d8+ 15 c2 g4! 16 f1 g8 17 hxg4 xg4 18 f3? h2! and White resigned.

Position 173

A.Morozevich-A.Petrushin

Krasnodar 1997

1 b4!

Intending b4-b5 to open a front on the queenside. The straightforward 1 g4 d7 2 xe6? fails to 2...xe6 3 xe6 xe6 4 xe6 xd4+ with equality.

1...wd8!

1...a6 seems preferable, avoiding a weakness on a7, although after 2 a4 d6 3 b5 a5 4 g4 f7 5 c1! d7 6 wa3! we7 7 c7 White keeps strong pressure.

2 b5 d6

Since 2 c2?! runs into 3 g4, winning the e6-pawn, Black has to surrender the c-file.

3 g4 f6

Or 3...e8 4 f5 gxf5 5 xf5, opening a new front with focus on the black king.

4 wa3! f7

Both 4...wc7? 5 c1 and 4...we7? 5 xd5! lose at once, while 4...wd7 5 c1 wf8 6 xe3 followed by 7 ecx3 is also decisive – Har Zvi.
5 \text{\textit{xd}6} \text{\textit{xe}6} 6 \text{\textit{xe}6} \text{\textit{xe}6} 7 \text{\textit{xe}6} \text{\textit{wd}7} 8 \text{\textit{we}3}! \text{\textit{xb}5} 9 \text{\textit{e}5+ \text{\textit{h}6} 10 \text{\textit{g}4!}

In view of the mating net, Black resigned. There can follow 10...\text{\textit{wd}3} 11 \text{\textit{h}2!} \text{\textit{wd}2} 12 \text{\textit{ff}6!}, when both 12...\text{\textit{zd}7} 13 \text{\textit{ff}5!} and 12...\text{\textit{xf}6} 13 \text{\textit{g}5+!} lead to mate.

\textbf{Position 174}

\textbf{P.Tregubov-A.Motylev}

Russian Championship, St. Petersburg 1998

1 \text{\textit{h}4!}

Preparing \text{\textit{h}4-\textit{h}5} with a new kingside front.

1...\text{\textit{h}5}

After 1...\text{\textit{f}5?} 2 \text{\textit{h}5!} Black suffers on the \text{\textit{b}1-\textit{h}7} diagonal.

2 \text{\textit{gg}5} \text{\textit{wd}7} 3 \text{\textit{h}2!} \text{\textit{f}6}

In view of the threat 4 \text{\textit{h}3}, Black had to weaken the light squares.

4 \text{\textit{xd}2} \text{\textit{h}6} 5 \text{\textit{xe}6} \text{\textit{xe}6} 6 \text{\textit{h}3} \text{\textit{gg}7}

6...\text{\textit{we}7} at once was more precise, whereas the active 6...\text{\textit{f}5?} leads to a disaster after 7 \text{\textit{wd}2+ \text{\textit{h}7} 8 \text{\textit{exf}5 \text{\textit{gxf}5} 9 \text{\textit{gg}5} \text{\textit{ff}7} 10 \text{\textit{xf}5!} \text{\textit{xf}5} 11 \text{\textit{xf}5} – \text{\textit{Hazai.}}}

7 \text{\textit{we}2} \text{\textit{we}7} 8 \text{\textit{ae}6!} \text{\textit{hh}8 9 \text{\textit{cc}3}

Sending more pieces to the kingside, where Black can’t defend himself easily due to the lack of space.

9...\text{\textit{gg}7} 10 \text{\textit{gg}1} \text{\textit{hh}6 11 \text{\textit{g}4!} \text{\textit{hxg}4} 12 \text{\textit{exg}4} \text{\textit{ff}8} 13 \text{\textit{gg}2} \text{\textit{wh}7} 14 \text{\textit{hh}3} \text{\textit{ea}8 15 \text{\textit{gg}1} \text{\textit{ee}7} 16 \text{\textit{cc}3!}

This intermediate move leaves Black unable to defend both flanks. There followed 16...\text{\textit{ee}8} 17 \text{\textit{cc}3} \text{\textit{xxh}4} 18 \text{\textit{exg}6} with the decisive threat of 19 \text{\textit{gg}7+}.

\textbf{Position 175}

\textbf{E.Perelshteyn-S.Atalik}

Philadelphia 2000

1...\text{\textit{b}5!}

Initiating a typical minority attack.

2 \text{\textit{g}4} \text{\textit{a}5} 3 \text{\textit{wd}1?!}

3 a3 b4 4 \text{\textit{axb}4 \text{\textit{axb}4} 5 \text{\textit{wd}1} was a lesser evil, getting rid of the potentially weak pawn.

3...\text{\textit{b}4} 4 \text{\textit{h}4} \text{\textit{a}4} 5 \text{\textit{dd}1?}

An ugly place for the knight. After 5 \text{\textit{h}5} a3! the black attack is more convincing; e.g. 6 \text{\textit{hxg}6 \text{\textit{fxg}6} 7 \text{\textit{cc}2} \text{\textit{axb}2} 8 \text{\textit{xxg}6 \text{\textit{xc}3}} with a decisive advantage – \text{\textit{Atalik. However, 5 \text{\textit{cxb}4 \textit{xb}4} 6 \text{\textit{xf}6} \text{\textit{gxg}6} 7 \text{\textit{h}5} offered more resistance.}

5...\text{\textit{de}4} 6 \text{\textit{f}3} \text{\textit{dd}6} 7 \text{\textit{gg}3 \text{\textit{fb}8}

Now White is doomed on the queenside. There followed 8 \text{\textit{ff}2 \text{\textit{bb}6} 9 \text{\textit{gg}2 \text{\textit{cc}4} 10 \text{\textit{ee}1} \text{\textit{dd}6} 11 \text{\textit{xd}6} \text{\textit{wd}6} 12 \text{\textit{cc}1 \text{\textit{cc}8} 13 \text{\textit{cxb}4 \text{\textit{xb}4} 14 \text{\textit{ee}2} \text{\textit{wb}6}, winning the d4-pawn, and soon the game as well.

\textbf{Position 176}

\textbf{P.Murdzia-M.Smоловic}

Hallsberg 1991

1 \text{\textit{h}4!}

Initiating a majority attack to soften up Black’s kingside.

1...\text{\textit{ad}8} 2 \text{\textit{cc}5}

Avoiding 2 \text{\textit{h}5?!} \text{\textit{ad}4 with unnecessary counterplay.

2...\text{\textit{wa}5} 3 \text{\textit{b}4} \text{\textit{wc}7} 4 \text{\textit{h}5!} \text{\textit{xd}1 5 \text{\textit{wdx}1}

Another option was 5 \text{\textit{xd}1 \text{\textit{we}5} 6 \text{\textit{hxg}6}, intending 6...\text{\textit{we}4 7 \text{\textit{xe}4 \text{\textit{xe}4} 8 \text{\textit{dd}8+ etc.}

5...\text{\textit{ff}7} 6 \text{\textit{hxg}6 \text{\textit{gxg}6} 7 \text{\textit{xa}7}

White adds an extra pawn to his other advantages.

7...\text{\textit{cc}3?}

This just accelerates the end. Black probably missed that the subsequent 8...\text{\textit{xb}4} fails to 9 \text{\textit{gg}4! with a decisive attack, just like in the game.

8 \text{\textit{ee}3} \text{\textit{ff}6 9 \text{\textit{gg}4!}

Now if 9...\text{\textit{gg}7}, then 10 \text{\textit{exg}6, winning the exchange.
9...cxd8 10 cxd8 g6 11 c5

White soon won.

**Position 177**

S. Djuric-L. D. Nisipeanu

FIDE World Championship, Las Vegas 1999

1...a5!

Initiating a minority attack to soften up the white queenside.

2 h6

After 2 a4?! the b3-pawn turns into an eternal weakness.

2...hxh6?

Thus Black gains time for his queenside attack. Also reasonable is 2...h8, keeping the strong bishop.

3 hxh6 a4! 4 g3 f6 5 cd1

Or 5 e4 e4 6 e4 axb3 7 axb3 a2 with an initiative.

5 axb3 6 axb3 a2 7 e3 g7?

Some clever prophylaxis directed at 8 exd6, which now fails to 8...cxd6+! 9 xg2 xh6 10 h3 d7 etc.

8 e2 e5

Preventing 9 f4 and overprotecting the d6-pawn.

9 d3 da8 10 ed1 a1

With a slight initiative thanks to the more active pieces.

**Position 178**

Zsu. Polgar-D. Paunovic

San Sebastian 1991

1 a6!

Softening up the c6-square for the knight.

1...bxa6

1...cxb4? failed to 2 axb7, while after 1...xc3 2 axb7 b8 3 c6! xc6 4 dx6 d3 5 e3 the passed pawns are decisive –

Polgar.

2 c6 xc6 3 bxc6

Thanks to the powerful protected passed pawn, White is practically winning.

3 c7 a4 b6 5 a1!

Preparing 6 b1.

5...e8 6 xa6 d8 7 b1 f5 8 xa7

White soon won.

**Position 179**

N. Short-M. Suba

Dortmund 1983

1...xd4 2 xd4 b5!

Initiating a minority attack that will dislodge the knight from c3 and oppress White’s queenside pawns. Also possible is 1...b5! 2 axb5 xd4 3 xd4 axb5.

3 axb5 axb5 4 d1

Responding to 4...b4 in advance. After 4 a1 f8 5 a7! b8 Black soon achieves...b5-b4 anyway, while most other White fifth moves run into 5...b4!, intending 6 xb4 d5 with a strong initiative.

4 d5!

Black immediately exploits the departure of the white knight in order to get a grip on the centre.

5 e5

Or 5 exd5 c5!, enabling 6...xd5 next move.

5...e4! 6 d3

After 6 xe4?! dxe4 7 xxe4 c6 White is suffering on the h1-a8 diagonal – Suba.

6...b4 7 d4 wb8!

Clearing the c-file for the rook and preparing ...b5.

8 f1 d7 9 g2 dcd7

Stepping up the pressure on the weak c2-pawn. The game continued 10 f3 g5! 11 e3 c3 12 f4 e7 13 d2 b5 14 d3 wb7! and Black soon returned the knight to e4 with a pleasant advantage.
Position 180
C. Matamoros Franco-A. Cruz Condori
Espartinas 2007

1 b4!
Initiating a minority attack to weaken Black's queenside pawns. 1 e4 e6 2 f4?! is less convincing in view of 2...b6+ 3 h1 g4 with counterplay.

1...a6
After 1...0-0 2 a4! e7 3 b5 c5 4 d1 d8 5 e3 White enjoys strong pressure.

2 e3 e6 3 a4! 0-0
Or 3...g4 4 d4 f6 5 xf6 xf6 6 b5 with similar play.

4 b5 a5 5 bxc6 bxc6
After 5...xc3?! 6 cxb7 ad8 7 ac1, or even 6 ac1!, the passed pawn outweighs the slight material deficit.

6 fc1 fc8 7 e4 xe4?
After 7...d5 8 d4 Black is worse due to his queenside weaknesses, but now he loses a pawn.

8 xe4 d5 9 xd5 cxd5 10 d1! b4
Or 10...d8 11 ac1, heading for c5.

11 xd5
White later realized his extra pawn.

Position 181
V. Vehi Bach-L. Psakhis
Manresa 1996

1...f4!
Preparing ...f4-f3 to damage the enemy pawn structure.

2 wg4
White is also under strong pressure after 2 xf4 xd4 with the double threat of 3 xf4 and 3 xf5.

2...f3! 3 gf3 ef5
Black immediately exploits the protected square on f5.

4 a3?!

After 4 ac1 xd6 5 exd6 wxd6 White has a horrible structure, but at least his king is safer than in the game.

4...h5!
A strong blow on the theme of deflection, which lets Black land a knight on f3.

5 wxh5 xf4 6 xd4 de4 7 d6 ef5!
Before taking the pawn it makes sense to mobilize the major pieces for an attack.

8 wh3 xe3+ 9 g2 wf7! 10 ac1
Or 10 h1 wg6+ 11 f1 d2+ 12 e1 f3 – Atlase.

10...h5! 11 xf3 xh2+ 12 h1 xh2 xf3 13 c2 h7! 14 g1 h8
White resigned.

Position 182
T. V. Petrosian-L. Psakhis
Las Palmas Interzonal 1982

1 a4!
Preparing a4-a5 with a majority attack on Black’s vulnerable queenside.

1...g7
After 1...a5?! 2 db5 e7 3 h6, preparing d2 and d1, Black is in big trouble.

2 a5 0-0
Or 2...bxa5 3 b3!, followed by bxa5 – Petrosian.

3 xb6 xb6 4 b3!
In order to exploit the new weakness on a5.

4...a7 5 f4 e5
An undesirable advance, but 5...d8? failed to 6 c5.

6 e3 c8 7 a5 a8
Here White continued 8 wd3 e6 9 b3 and later realized his positional advantage. However, 8 c5! was even stronger, e.g.

8...dxc5 9 xc5 e8 10 d6 wa7 11 c6 wb7 12 xe5 with a decisive advantage – Petrosian.
Position 183
R. Åström-J. Hellsten
Sweden 1997

1...a4!

Softening up the b3-square for the knight.
2...\f5

After 2 bxa4? \wa5 Black recovers the pawn with a slight edge thanks to his sounder pawn structure. However, 2 b4 \db3 3 c5! \xc1 4 \xc1 was a better choice, with some compensation for the exchange.

2...\xc5 3 b4 \db3 4 \ac3 c5!

Preventing c4-c5 and softening up the dark squares on the queenside.

5 bxc5?!

After 5 \d3 \c7, followed by ...\fd8, White is also under pressure, but now his position collapses.

5...\wa5 6 \ae3 \d2! 7 \xb7 \xb7 8 \xb7 \xf1 9 \xf1 \xc5 10 \f3?

This loses at once. 10 \e2 was relatively better, when 10...\xa3 11 \a2 \wb4 12 \a6 \wb3! seems decisive.
10...\d8 11 \ac1 \wb6!

The bishop is trapped, so White resigned.

Position 184
T. Nyback-A. Vuckovic
German League 2005

1 \d3!

Creating the threat of 2 \xg6+ and preparing a future h4-h5 to soften up Black's kingside. The immediate 1 h4!? is also possible; e.g. 1...\f5 2 \d3 \xd3 3 \xd3 and 4 h5 next.

1...\g7 2 h4! \f7?!

Exposing the king. Preferable was 2...\we7!? 3 h5 f5 4 \wc3 0-0 5 hxg6 hxg6 6 \a7 with a clear, though not decisive advantage – Ftacnik.

3 h5! f5 4 \xg7 \xg7 5 \a7!

5 \c3+? \f6 is less convincing, but now Black has to parry that check.

5...\f8 6 \g4!

A nice blow. Also strong is 6 hxg6 hxg6 7 \a4!, heading for h4.

6...\f7

The alternatives are no better, e.g. 6...\xf4 7 hxg6 h6 8 \f5 and wins – Ftacnik.

7 \c3+ \h6

This leads to a disaster but Black was lost, e.g. 7...\f6 8 h6+ winning his bishop.

8 hxg6+ \xg6 9 \xf5+ \xf5 10 \g1+ \h5 11 \e2+

Black resigned.

Position 185
L. Portisch-U. Andersson
Milan 1975

1...b5!

Softening up White's pawn majority and freeing the d5-square for the knight.

2 cxb5 axb5 3 b4?!

Preventing ...b5-b4, but also leaving the queenside structure in a bad shape. 3 \xb5 \xa2 was equally unpleasant, whereas 3 \e5 seems like the least of evils, with just a slight disadvantage after 3...\xe5 4 \xe5 b4 5 \xa4 \c7.

3...\wa6 4 a3 \b6! 5 \e5 \c8 6 \d3 \f8

After some consolidating moves Black is ready to fight for the initiative by ...\bd5 or ...

7 g4 \bd5 8 \xd5 \xd5 9 \wd4?

This loses a piece. 9 \we4 was correct, when 9...\ac7 10 \h3 \f6 preserves the advantage; e.g. 11 \wb1 \ac2 or 11 \wd3 \wd6! 12 \xb5! \ac2 with strong pressure.

9...\f6 10 \h3

Or 10 \f3? \c4, trapping the queen.

10...\xe5 11 \xe5 \f7

Black soon won.
Position 186
F.Nijboer-I.Smirin
Wijk aan Zee 1993

1 f5!

Softening up the d5-square for the knight.
1...c5

After 1...exf5 2 exf5 g5 3 g3 White is clearly better due to the weaknesses on d5 and e6 – Nijboer, while 1...e5 2 d6! d5 e6 3 fxe6 dxe6 4 d5, followed by g4, leads to an even bigger advantage, as does 1...gxf5 2 exf5 e5 3 e6! with similar play.

2 fxg6 hxg6 3 xf6 e5

As a result of White’s second move, 3...dxe4 now runs into 4 dxe4 dxe4 5 h6! with a strong attack.

4 f3 h5

Now Black will never be able to recover the pawn, but after 4...dxe4 5 dxe4 dxe4 6 h6 or 4...f7 5 h6!, intending 6...xf6 7 g5, his king would find himself in danger.

5 d5 d6 6 h5 d5 7 g5 d5 8 exd5

White later realized his extra pawn.

Position 187
M.Jadoul-A.Karpov
Brussels 1986

1 h5!

Preventing ...h5-h4 to soften up the kingside.

2 a5?!

2 h4 runs into 2...g4, while 2 f4? h4! is even worse, when 3 g4 drops a pawn after 3...dxc5. But 2 cxd6 g6 3 c5 was a better choice, when 3...dxc5 4 dxc5 h4! keeps the initiative – Karpov.

2...dxc5 3 bxc5 h4!

Softening up the f4-square for the knight.

4 g4 d4 5 xf4

A sad necessity, but any move with the other bishop drops a pawn.

5...xf4 6 d3 c7 7 b4

White tries to cover both a5 and e4, but in vain.

7...x4 8 xe4 dxe4 9 xe4 xa5 10 c6

Black has a decisive advantage and won after 11 a1 c3 12 e5? b2.

Position 188
J.Lautier-R.Ponomarov
Enghien les Bains 1999

1 h4!

Softening up the g6-pawn (and the black kingside as a whole) for a later attack.

1...h5

The less committal 1...f7 permits 2 h5 gxh5 3 f4!, when Black is unable to cover all his weaknesses; e.g. 3...ed8 4 a5! or 3...c7 4 d3 f8 5 e2!.

2 a5 c7 3 e2!

Heading for f4 in order to attack the weak points at g6 and e6. The immediate 2 e2?! xa4 was less clear.

3...xa5 4 f4 b4 5 e1!

A new piece joins the attack. 5...xg6?! f7 6 f4 b6 is less convincing.

5...f7

White also breaks through after 5...e1+ 6 xe1 f7 7 e3 e5 8 d3!.

6 a6 e4

Or 6...b6 7 g6 c4 8 d1 e5 9 xd6 a4 10 xb4 cxb4 11 xh5 winning – Lautier.

7 b7 b7 8 e8+ h7 9 e7 b1+ 10 h2 c2 11 e3! b2 12 e6

Black resigned.
Position 189

R. Åkesson-J. Hellsten
Hallsberg 1996

1...a5!
Preventing ...a5-a4 with a majority attack.

2...d1
After 2 a3?! c5 White has a problem with the b3-pawn; e.g. 3 b4 axb4 4 axb4 d3 5 b5 c5!, creating a dangerous passed pawn, or 3 b1 h4!, when 4 f2? fails to 4...d3+.

2...a4! 3 b4
Or 3 bxa4 a8, recovering the pawn with an improved structure.

3...b6 4 f2 c7?! 5 b5?!
In time trouble both players missed 5 c3!, when 5...c4? fails to 6 xd5+! cxd5 7 xd5. Therefore on the previous move Black should have preferred 4...e7, followed by 5...f7, with an unclear game.

5...c4 6 bxc6
Now the material balance is restored, but after 6...d3 b6 7 bxc6 bxc6 the chances also are about even.

6...e3 7 cxb7+ xc2 8 c1 xb7 9 xc2 d8
Draw agreed, although Black might be slightly better.

Position 190

P. Leko-S. Lputian
European Club Cup, Ljubljana 1995

1...h5!
Softening up the f5-square for the knight.

2 gxh5
After 2 h3?! a3! 3 c3 hxg4 4 hxg4 g6 Black is clearly better – Lputian. In effect White has to look out for both 5...xf4 and 5...h4.

2...xd4 3 cxd4 f5 4 c3 a4!
Preparing ...a8 in order to enter on the a-file.

5 d1 a6 6 wb2
After 6 e2 xd4, both 7 xd4 a2 and 7 cxd4 xb6 8 xb6 xb6 yield Black a pleasant advantage.

6...a8 7 d2 a2 8 b2 a1 9 g2 a3 10 g4
Challenging the strong enemy knight.

10...xd4 11 cxd4 b5!
Exploiting the fact that 12 xb5? runs into 12...a2.

12 e2 xe2
12...c4!? might be even stronger.

13 xe2 c3
Despite the minus pawn Black enjoys a clear initiative and went on to win.

Position 191

E. Sveshnikov-S. Palatnik
Belgrade 1988

1 xe6! fxe6 2 h4!
Initiating a majority attack to soften up the enemy kingside. Now 2...xh4? runs into 3 g4.

2...c6 3 h5 g5
Black can only keep the material balance by surrendering the b1-h7 diagonal.

4 g3 d7 5 c2 a8
After 5...h6?! 6 g6+ Black's king gets stuck in the centre. If 5...0-0-0?, then 6 h6! just like in the game, but not 6...xh7 7 b4! 7 b1 d4 with counterplay.

6 h6!
Fixing a weakness on h7.

6...f7 7 0-0-0 a7?!
Now the black king becomes exposed. Preferable was 7...0-0-0 speeding development, when 8 e2!?, heading for g4, keeps some advantage.

8 a4+! c6 9 c4! a6

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Mastering Chess Strategy

Or 9...dxc4 10 ââxc4 çd5 11 çxd5 exd5 12 e6! with a clear edge – 5veshnikov.
10 ëa5 ëd8 11 âc2!

Heading for the a4-e8 diagonal. The game continued 11...çf5 12 cxd5 cxd5 13 ëa4+ ëd7 14 ëd3!, followed by âc3 with a decisive attack.

Position 192
L.Vogt-U.Andersson
Havana 1975

1...h5!

Preparing ...h5-h4 in order to fix the g3-square and indirectly weaken the f4-pawn. It is important to realize this idea before White manages to play 2 âf3 followed by g2-g3, after which he could meet ...h5-h4 by g3-g4.

2 âf3

It is difficult to suggest anything better.

2...âxf3 3 ëxf3 h4! 4 ëd2 âc4!

The most powerful way of doubling the rooks.

5 b3

This leads to new weaknesses, but 5 çe2? çe4 6 ëd4 çg3+! didn’t help either.

5...çc6 6 a4 b4 7 çe2 çac8 8 c4

If 8 ëd4, then 8...âc3 intending ...âd5.

8...bxc3 9 ëxc3 çd5 10 ëxc6 ëxc6 11 ëb2

The threat of 11...âc5 12 b4 âc4 obliges White to vacate the e1-a5 diagonal for the bishop.

11...âf6 12 ëa2 âc8!

Heading for b8 in order to attack the weakness at b3.

13 ëd2 ëb8 14 çc1 ëb4!

After this exchange White won’t be able to cover both weaknesses at b3 and f4. There followed 15 ëxb4 ëxb4 16 ëf2 âe7!

17 çf3 çd6 18 çe2 çe4 19 çd3 çc5 20 çc3 çf2 21 çc2 çg7 22 çg1 çxf4 and Black soon won.

Position 193
A.Karpov-L.Stein
USSR Championship, Leningrad 1971

1 b5!

Creating a strong passed pawn.

1...cxb5?

1...d7 was preferable, keeping more lines closed around the passed pawn, although after 2 b6 ëb7 3 c5! dxc5 4 âb1 çe6 5 çc4! the white knight soon enters on c5 with a strong initiative.

2 cxb5 ëd7 3 âb1 âe8 4 b6!

White keeps advancing the pawn, aware that 4...çxa4? fails to 5 bxc7.

4...ëb7 5 çb5 ça8 6 ëb3 çe6

After 6...âxb5 7 ëxb5 çxa4 8 ëxa4 ëxc3 9 ëa7! the blockade is broken.

7 ëb4 çe7 8 çfc1 d5 9 ëb2 d4 10 ëb4!

Winning the c5-square for the knight.

10...çg5

Or 10...âxb4 11 ëxb4 ëxc1+ 12 çxc1 ëxe4 13 çc6! ëc8 14 b7 ëxc6 15 çe1 and wins – Karpov.

11 ëxc8 ëxc8 12 ëe2 ëa8

Parrying the threat of 13 çc6.

13 çd6!

A key move that prepares çc7 in order to free the knight from the defence of b6. There followed 13...çg6 14 çc2 ëc8 15 çc7 çd8 16 çc5 ëxc7 17 ëxb7! ëxc2 18 ëxd8 and the passed pawn soon proved decisive.

Position 194
E.Solozhenkin-J.Hellsten
European Club Cup, Rethymnon 2003

1...d4!

Advancing the pawn before White manages to set up a blockade by çb2-d3. Now 2 çb2? doesn’t work due to 2...ëxc5.

2 b4 d3! 3 çd1?
This time 3 \( \text{Q}b2 \) fails to 3...\( \text{Q}c3 \), but 3 \( \text{f}3 \) avoiding an attack on f2 was a better choice. There can follow 3...\( \text{W}d5 \) 4 \( \text{Q}b6 \) \( \text{W}d4 \) + 5 \( \text{Q}f1 \) \( \text{e}5 \) with a strong black initiative. White can’t improve this line by 5 \( \text{g}h1 \) due to 5...\( \text{h}h6 \) 6 \( \text{W}xh6 \) \( \text{d}2 \) 7 \( \text{W}d1 \) \( \text{e}e8 \) etc.

3...\( \text{W}d4 \) 4 \( \text{W}xd3 \)

After 4 \( \text{W}f1 \) \( \text{W}e4 \) 5 \( \text{Q}c3 \) \( \text{W}e5 \) 6 \( \text{Q}d1 \) \( \text{W}e2 \) 7 \( \text{W}g5 \) \( \text{W}xf2+ \) ! 8 \( \text{W}xh2 \) \( \text{d}2 \) Black wins.

4...\( \text{W}xf2+ \) 5 \( \text{W}h1 \) \( \text{W}xd3 \) 6 \( \text{W}xd3 \) \( \text{W}xc5 \) 7 g3 \( \text{W}xb4 \)

With a decisive advantage.

**Position 195**

L.Thiede-T.Heinemann
German League 2002

1 \( \text{Q}c5 \)

Eliminating the black bishop in order to facilitate \( \text{d}5-\text{d}6 \).

1...bxc5

After 1...\( \text{Q}c8 \) 2 \( \text{Q}e6+ \) \( \text{Q}xe6 \) 3 \( \text{dxe6} \) Black loses material – Ribli.

2 \( \text{W}xb7+ \) \( \text{Q}e7 \) 3 \( \text{W}xa8! \)

A strong and necessary sacrifice. Any queen retreats permitted 3...\( \text{W}d6 \) or 3...\( \text{Q}d6 \) with a blockade.

3...\( \text{W}xa8 \) 4 \( \text{d}6 \) \( \text{W}xg2+ \)

Or 4...\( \text{W}e8 \) 5 \( \text{dxe7} \) \( \text{Q}xe7 \) 6 \( \text{W}d8 \) \( \text{W}a4 \) 7 \( \text{Q}d7 \) \( \text{W}a1+ \) 8 \( \text{Q}f1 \) \( \text{Q}f7 \) 9 \( \text{Q}a8! \), followed by \( \text{Q}xaxa7 \) – Ribli.

5 \( \text{W}xg2 \) \( \text{Q}d7 \) 6 \( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{Q}f7 \) 7 \( \text{g}4! \) \( \text{Q}g7 \) 8 \( \text{W}xc5 \)

White soon won.

**Position 196**

P.Svidler-A.Motylev
Russian Championship,
Moscow 2004

1...\( \text{c}1+! \) 2 \( \text{Q}e1 \)

After 2 \( \text{Wxc1} \) \( \text{Wxc1} \+) White loses the f4-pawn.

2...\( \text{W}c2! \)

Eradicating the blockade of the passed pawn.

3 \( \text{W}xc2 \) \( \text{W}xc2 \) 4 \( \text{e}6 \)

On other moves 4...d3 is decisive.

4...\( \text{fxe6} \) 5 \( \text{W}xe6 \) \( \text{Q}c5 \) 6 \( \text{Q}h2 \) \( \text{d}3! \)

The pawn reaches d2 with decisive effect.

7 \( \text{Q}d1 \) \( \text{d}2 \) 8 \( \text{Q}g3 \) \( \text{Q}d3 \) 9 \( \text{Q}g4 \)

Or 9 \( \text{Q}xa6 \) \( \text{e}3 \), followed by...\( \text{Q}c1 \).

9...\( \text{Q}d4 \) 10 \( \text{Q}e8+ \) \( \text{Q}h7 \) 11 \( \text{f}5 \) \( \text{Q}c1 \) 12 \( \text{Q}e5 \)

\( \text{Q}e3! \)

Ruling out any mating ideas with 13 \( \text{Q}g6 \). White resigned.

**Position 197**

E.Solozhenkin-O.Sepp
Finnish Team Championship 2002

1 \( \text{Q}e1! \)

Heading for d3 to block the passed pawn. In contrast, after 1 \( \text{Q}fd1 \) \( \text{Q}d5! \) Black has some pressure on e5.

1...\( \text{Q}a6 \)

Preparing...\( \text{c}6-\text{c}5 \). After 1...\( \text{Q}c7 \)?! 2 \( \text{Q}d3 \), followed by \( \text{Q}fc1 \), Black ends up cramped.

2 \( \text{Q}d3 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 3 \( \text{bxc5} \) \( \text{Q}xc5 \) 4 \( \text{Q}xc5 \) \( \text{W}xc5 \) 5 \( \text{e}6! \)

White exploits the exposed position of the bishop on \( \text{a}6 \) in order to create some activity.

5...\( \text{W}e7 \)

If 5...d3, then 6 \( \text{e}7 \) \( \text{Q}e8 \) 7 \( \text{W}xd3 \) \( \text{Q}xe7 \) 8 \( \text{e}4! \) with a decisive plus – Solozhenkin.

6 \( \text{exf7+} \) \( \text{Q}xf7 \)

Or 6...\( \text{W}xf7 \) 7 \( \text{Q}fd1 \) keeping the d-pawn at bay.

7 \( \text{W}d3! \)

Thus White blocks the passed pawn and creates the threat of \( \text{a}3-\text{a}4 \), whereas Black has a problem with his exposed king. The game continued 7...\( \text{Q}d6 \) 8 \( \text{Q}fe1 \) \( \text{W}d7 \) 9 \( \text{Q}g5 \) \( \text{f}8? \)! 10 \( \text{W}d2 \) a4 11 \( \text{Q}e4! \), followed by \( \text{Q}e1 \), with a decisive attack.
Position 198
D.Zakarian-J.Hellsten
Agios Kirykos 2004

1... @b3!

With the idea 2...cxb4 3 axb4 a5 in order
to create a powerful passed pawn. 1...cxb4?!
2 axb4 @b3 is less precise due to 3 @xc8
@xc8 4 b5! when one pawn stops two.

2 e1 cxb4 3 axb4 a5! 4 bxa5 bx a5 5 h4

Both 5 @e5?! a4 6 @d1 @c5, preparing
...a3-a2, and 5 d4 a4 6 h4 g4 7 @e5 a3 8 e4
a2 9 @xb3 @xb3 10 @xb3 @xd4 are equally
troublesome for White.

5...@xf3 6 @xb3?

After 6 @xf3 @xd3 or 6 @xf3 a4 White is
also suffering, but now he loses on the spot.
6...@xe2 7 @xe2 @c1+ 8 @h2 @a1! 9 @f3
@h1+ 10 @g3 @e5+

White resigned.

Position 199
V.Golod-A.Vydeslaver
Israeli Championship, Tel Aviv 2002

1 @ac1!

Initiating a series of exchanges that will
facilitate the advance of the passed pawn.
Of course 1 d7? @xf6 2 dxc8@ @xc8 would
be counter-productive.

1...@wa4 2 @xc8 @xc8 3 @xe4

Another possible move order is 3 d7 @d8
4 @xe4 @xe4 5 @xd3.

3...@xe4 4 d7 @d8

Or 4...@a8 5 @xd3 @xd3 6 @xd3 @e7 7
@e3! and wins – Golod.

5 @xd3

In view of 5...@xd3 6 @xd3, followed by 7
@c7, or 5...@c6 6 @c3+! @xc3 7 bxc3, pre-
paring the same move, Black resigned.

Position 200
P.Cramling-E.Kovalevskaya
European Women’s Championship,
Plovdiv 2008

1 @e4!

With the double intention of 2 @de1,
seizing the e-file, and 2 @f4, fighting
against the blockade on d6.

1...@fe8?

1...@fd8 was a lesser evil, when 2 @de1,
heading for e7, keeps the initiative.

2 @df4! @xf4

2...@ed8? fails to 3 @e8+, while after
2...@d7 3 @xe8+ @xe8 4 d6 Black is also suf-
f ering – Cramling.

3 @xf4 @f8

Sad but necessary. After 3...@e7 4 d6
@d7 5 @a4!, both 5...@c6 6 @c4 and 5...@dd8
6 d7 @b8 7 @e1 win for White.

4 d6 @cd8 5 @e1

5 @c4! @c8 6 @c7 @e6 7 @xa7 was even
simpler – Cramling.

5...@c8?

Not 5...@xd6? 6 @xf7!, but 5...@c6 was
preferable, when 6 @d4 maintains a clear
edge.

6 @xf7! @xf7 7 @e7 @d7

Or 7...@df8 8 d7 @xd7 9 @xd7 g6 10
@xa7 @g7 11 @xf7+ @xf7 12 @xf7 @xf7 13
g4 with a winning pawn endgame.

8 @xf7 @h8 9 f3

With a decisive advantage.

Position 201
O.Romanishin-V.Anand
Candidates match (game 7),
New York 1994

1...@xe4!

Preparing ...@c4-d6 with a firm blockade
of the passed pawn. 1...@c4?! 2 @c3 is less
precise, when White may later recapture.
with the knight on e4.

2...\(\text{Bxe4} \text{Qxc4} 3 \text{Wb3} \text{Qd6} 4 \text{Qg2} \text{Qd7} 5 \text{Qd2}

Now Black gets considerable activity. The restrictive 5...\(\text{Qe3}\) \(\text{Wxa5}\) 6 \(\text{Qfc1}\) \(\text{Qfc8}\) yielded White a slight edge – Anand.

5...\(\text{Qc5}\) 6 \(\text{Wa3} \text{Qce4} 7 \text{Qb4?!} \text{a5}\) 8 \(\text{Qe1}\)

Black’s point was 8...\(\text{Qxe4} \text{axb4}\) 9 \(\text{Wxb4}\) \(\text{Qa6}\), followed by ...\(\text{Qb6}\), with strong counterplay. Thus White should have played 7...\(\text{Qe1}\) at once.

8...\(\text{Qc4}\) 9 \(\text{Wd3} \text{Qed6}\)

Black’s clever knight regrouping has enabled the idea of a central break with ...\(e5\)-\(e4\).

10 \(\text{Qc3}\) \(\text{e4!} 11 \text{Qc2?!}\)

A lesser evil was 11...\(\text{Qxe4} \text{Qxb2} 12 \text{Qxb2} \text{Qab1}\) with just a slight disadvantage.

11...\(\text{Qxc3}\) 12 \(\text{Wxc3} \text{Qe8}\) 13 \(\text{b3} \text{Qe5}\) 14 \(\text{Qd4}\) \(\text{Qe8}\)

With a strong initiative thanks to the excellent knights. In contrast, the passed pawn on d5 has completely lost its potential.

Position 202

C.Garcia Palermo-S.Giardelli

Pinamar 2001

1...\(\text{h4}\)

Opening a new front on the kingside, in order to exhaust the black defence.

1...\(\text{h5}\)

After 1...\(\text{Qb7}\)

2...\(\text{Qb3}\) 3 \(\text{Qxb3}\) \(\text{Qxb3}\) 3 \(\text{Qc7}\) White wins material, while 1...\(\text{e5}\)! 2 \(\text{Qe3}\), followed by 3 \(\text{Qd1}\), or 1...\(\text{h5}\)! 2 \(\text{Qg3}\) \(\text{Qh7}\) 3 \(\text{Qd3}\) \(\text{Qxd3}\) 4 \(\text{Qxd3}\), followed by 5 \(\text{Qc7}\), is equally troublesome for Black.

2...\(\text{h7}\)?!

2...\(\text{Qb3}\) was critical, when 3 \(\text{Qxb3}\) \(\text{Qxb3}\) 4 \(\text{Qc7}\) \(\text{Qd5}\) 5 \(\text{Qxb7}\) \(\text{Qxb6}\) 6 \(\text{Qc7}\) \(\text{Qd8}\) (not 6...\(\text{Qe8}\)! 7 \(\text{Qa6}\)) 7 \(\text{Qf3}\)! d5 8 hxg6 hxg6 9 \(\text{Qg4}\) keeps some winning chances. Therefore 2...\(\text{Qe3}\) or 2 \(\text{Qc3}\), avoiding the fork on b3 before playing h4-h5, would have been more technical.

3 \(\text{hxg6} \text{hxg6}\) 4 \(\text{Qg3}\) \(\text{Qf7}\) 5 \(\text{Qh3}\)

Now 5...\(\text{Qb3}\) 6 \(\text{Qxb3}\) \(\text{Qxb3}\) 7 \(\text{Qc7}\) is indeed decisive; e.g. 7...\(\text{Qd5}\) 8 \(\text{Qxd6}\) or 7...\(\text{Qxc7}\) 8 \(\text{Qxc7}\) \(\text{Qd5}\) 9 \(\text{Qf3!}\) – Stohl.

5...\(\text{e5}\)

Parrying the threat of 6 \(\text{Qh7+}\) \(\text{Qg8}\) 7 \(\text{Qh8+}\). At this point White continued 6 \(\text{Qxd6+}\) \(\text{Qxd6}\) 7 \(\text{Qxc5}\) \(\text{Qxc5}\) 8 \(\text{Qxc5}\) and later realized his extra pawn. However, by 6 \(\text{Qxc5}\) dxc5 7 \(\text{Qd1}\) \(\text{Qe6}\) 8 \(\text{Qd6+}\) \(\text{Qxd6}\) 9 \(\text{Qh7}\) he could have won on the spot.

Position 203

E.Tomashovsky-A.Iljin

Russian Junior Championship 2006

1...\(\text{Qe5}\)

Supported by the tactic 1...\(\text{Wxe5}\)? 2 \(\text{Qh7+}\), White prepares \(\text{Qc4}\) in order to break the blockade on d6. In contrast, 1 \(\text{Qd2}\) failed to 1...\(\text{Qxd5}\).

1...\(\text{Qb5}\)

Logical but tactically ill-founded. Black is also in trouble after 1...\(\text{b5}\)! 2 \(\text{Qb1}\), intending \(\text{Qg4}\). A better try is 1...\(\text{Qad8}\) 2 \(\text{Qc4}\) \(\text{a6}\), when 3 \(\text{Qb1}\)? keeps strong pressure along the e-file. 3 \(\text{d6}\) b5! 4 dxe7 \(\text{Qxd1}\) 5 \(\text{Qxd1}\) bxc4 is less clear.

2...\(\text{Qc5}\)

Now 2...\(\text{Qa6}\) or 2...\(\text{a6}\) fails to 3 \(\text{Qg4}\) \(\text{Qf4}\) 4 \(\text{g3}\).

2...\(\text{Qb6}\) 3 \(\text{d6}\) \(\text{Qg6}\) 4 \(\text{Qxg6}\) \(\text{fxg6}\) 5 \(\text{d7}\) \(\text{Qd8}\) 6 \(\text{a4}\)

Deflecting the bishop.

6...\(\text{Qa6}\)

Both 6...\(\text{Qxa4}\) 7 \(\text{Qc4+}\) and 6...\(\text{Qc6}\) 7 \(\text{Qxc6}\) \(\text{Qxc6}\) 8 \(\text{Qe8+}\) \(\text{Qh7}\) 9 \(\text{Qd5}\) win – Ribli. In the game White adds an extra pawn to his other assets.

7 \(\text{Qg6}\) \(\text{Qg7}\)
Or 7...\texttt{W}xg6 8 \texttt{W}c8! \texttt{W}f6 9 \texttt{W}e8+ etc.
8 \texttt{E}e5

The game concluded 8...\texttt{E}e6 9 \texttt{W}d5 \texttt{E}e7 10 \texttt{h}3 \texttt{b}6 11 \texttt{W}e4+ \texttt{g}8 12 \texttt{g}4! and Black resigned.

\textit{Position 204}

\textbf{V.Ivanchuk-S.Tiviakov}
Benidorm (rapid) 2008

1 \texttt{cxb5}! \texttt{E}xc3 2 \texttt{bxa6}!!

A rook sacrifice that produces a dangerous passed pawn. Less convincing is 2 \texttt{d}d4?! \texttt{E}xc1 3 \texttt{W}xa5 \texttt{bxa5} 4 \texttt{W}xb5 with unclear play – Golubev.
2...\texttt{E}f6

A key variation is 2...\texttt{W}c7 3 \texttt{E}xc3 \texttt{W}xc3 4 \texttt{W}xc3 \texttt{E}xc3 5 a7 \texttt{E}c8 6 \texttt{a}6!, followed by \texttt{b}7 and a8\texttt{W}, when White ends up with a sound extra pawn.
3 \texttt{f}3! \texttt{E}c5?!

3...\texttt{d}d7 4 a7 \texttt{E}c5 was preferable, although after 5 b4 \texttt{W}xa7 6 \texttt{bxc5} dxc5 7 \texttt{W}f2 White’s advantage is practically decisive – Golubev.
4 \texttt{E}xc5! \texttt{E}xc5 5 b4!

Recovering the rook with a decisive advantage thanks to the passed pawn.
5...\texttt{W}a3 6 \texttt{bxc5} dxc5 7 \texttt{h}6! \texttt{G}d7 8 \texttt{b}5

Black resigned.

\textit{Position 205}

\textbf{M.Botvinnik-A.Lilienthal}
Moscow 1936

1...b5?

This helps White to create a strong passed pawn on the a-file. The prophylactic 1...\texttt{Ec}8 was better.
2 \texttt{cxb5} \texttt{axb5} 3 \texttt{E}dc1!

Simple but strong. Now that 3...\texttt{Ec}8 fails tactically, White wins the battle for the c-file.

3...\texttt{E}xc3 4 \texttt{E}xc3 \texttt{bxa4} 5 \texttt{E}c7!

A strong intermediate move based on the tactical line 5...\texttt{W}xb3? 6 \texttt{E}xe7+\texttt{W}xe7 7 \texttt{E}c8+!

5...\texttt{W}b5 6 \texttt{bxa4}

The straightforward 6 \texttt{E}xe7+?! \texttt{W}xe7 7 \texttt{E}xe7 \texttt{axb3} 8 \texttt{E}c7! was also strong, but Botvinnik prefers a more technical win.
6...\texttt{W}e2+ 7 \texttt{W}f2 \texttt{W}xf2+ 8 \texttt{E}f2

Thanks to his outside passed pawn and active pieces, White is winning.
8...\texttt{e}6

Or 8...\texttt{a}8 9 \texttt{E}c8+! \texttt{E}xc8 10 \texttt{E}xe7+ \texttt{a}8 11 \texttt{E}xc8 etc.
9 \texttt{E}b6!

A good square for the knight, where it prevents ...\texttt{a}8 and enables a rook exchange. There followed 9...\texttt{E}f6 10 \texttt{a}5 \texttt{E}b8
11 \texttt{E}c8+! \texttt{E}xc8 12 \texttt{E}xc8 \texttt{E}e8 13 \texttt{a}6 \texttt{E}c7 14 \texttt{a}7 \texttt{a}8 15 \texttt{E}xd6 \texttt{E}f8 16 \texttt{E}e5 and the king entered with decisive effect.

\textit{Position 206}

\textbf{T.Nyback-M.Carlsen}
Dresden Olympiad 2008

1 \texttt{a}4! \texttt{axb4} 2 \texttt{axb5}!

Giving up the knight in exchange for two powerful connected passed pawns. If Black had tried to avoid this by playing 1...\texttt{bxa4}!, he would have ended up clearly worse after 2 \texttt{b}5!.
2...\texttt{bxc3} 3 \texttt{E}xc6 \texttt{E}f6 4 \texttt{W}xc3 \texttt{E}f8

If 4...\texttt{E}e4, intending 5...\texttt{E}h4, then 5 \texttt{E}xe7+ \texttt{W}xe7 6 \texttt{W}b2, followed by \texttt{b}5-\texttt{b}6, with a devastating initiative.
5 \texttt{E}xa8?

Swapping off one of the passed pawns’ opponents.
5...\texttt{E}xa8 6 \texttt{E}a1! \texttt{E}e4 7 \texttt{W}b2 \texttt{E}e8 8 \texttt{E}e5

With the strong threat of 9 \texttt{b}6, which obliges Black to take radical measures.
8...\texttt{E}xc5 9 \texttt{b}6 \texttt{W}b7 10 \texttt{W}b5!
A well-calculated blow. Also strong was 10 dxc5 a6 11 b5 c8 12 d7! with decisive simplifications.

10...a8 11 axa8 wxa8 12 dxc5 a1+ 13 h2 xe5+ 14 g3

Now the passed pawns win the game. Play saw 14...d4 15 b7 w5 16 b2 dxe3 17 fxe3 xc5 18 b8 with a quick win.

**Position 207**

E.Gleizerov-V.Novgorodskij

Kazan 2007

1...e6!

Sacrificing the exchange in order to create counterplay. After 1...d8?! 2 dxc7 axd1 3 axd1 the passed pawn on c7 proves too strong; e.g. 3...b7 4 xb7 wb7 5 d8+ e8 6 b8! wc6 7 xb5! f8 8 bxa7 ecx7 9 xc7 a7 10 b6 and Black resigned in S.Atalik-B.Kreiman, Los Angeles 1998. 1...b7?! 2 xb7 wb7 3 dxc7 is equally unconvincing.

2 axa8 xf4 3 gxf4 h3

The bishop exchange will leave the white kingside without defenders.

4 g2 xg2 5 hxg2 b4! 6 a4

Or 6 d5 wxd6 7 xf6+ xf6 8 wc1 we6!, hitting e2 and preparing ...c4-c3.

6 c6+ g1 c4

A complex position has arisen, where Black’s active pieces and the misplaced knight on a4 seem to compensate for the material deficit. The game continued 8 c1 a5 9 wc2 e8 10 f6d1 xd6 11 xd6 wxd6 12 wc4 d7! 13 b3 wg4+ 14 h1 wh4 with counterplay for the pawn.

**Position 208**

A.Halifman-E.Ermenkov

Elenite 1994

1 b4!!

Sacrificing the queen in exchange for a few connected passed pawns. Obviously 1 wb7xb8 2 wa6 a8 would just have led to a draw.

1...xc6

Or 1...xb4 2 wa6 a8 3 a7, followed by b6-b7, while 2 b6!? xc6 3 xc6 is also strong.

2 dxc6 e6

After 2...wb6 3 c4 a8 4 a1! the black queen is left alone in the defence; e.g.

4...xa1 5 xa1 e6 6 a6 wc7 7 bxc5 dxc5 8 xc5 with a quick win – Halifman.

3 ed1!

3 bxc5 d5 4 b6 d4 5 c7 we7! is less clear – Halifman.

3 wb8

Both 3...cxd4 4 b6 and 3...d5 4 a5c5 d4 5 b6 are equally desperate for Black.

4 bxc5 d5 5 exd5 exd5 6 xd5 we8 7 c7 wf7 8 b6! wxc5 9 b7

Black resigned.

**Position 209**

J.Hellsten-R.Hungaski

Mendoza 2005

1 f3!

Preparing e3-e4 in order to advance the kingside majority. Less convincing is 1 e4?! dxe4 2 cxe4 wc6 with rough equality.

1...b6 2 e4 e8

After 2...dxe4 3 fxe4 g4 4 cd1 White is also better.

3 fd1

3 e5 wd7 4 f4 g7 is less promising.

3...f5 4 e5 we7 5 f4 a7 c7 6 b3!

Tying the knight on b6 to the defence of the c4-pawn to prevent ...c8 and ...b7-b5.

6...wd7 7 gf1 fd8 8 e3 h8 9 wb2 g5?

This just produces a weak pawn on f5, but Black had run out of constructive ideas.

10 f1 cxb3 11 axb3 g8 12 d3 wf8 13
\[ \text{e2 f7} \]

At this point the simple 14 fxg5 f4 (or 14...\text{xg5} 15 \text{f4}) 15 \text{xf4} \text{xf4} 16 \text{xc7} would have led to a decisive advantage.

\textbf{Position 210}

\textbf{T.Nyback-V.Ivanchuk}

European Championship, Antalya 2004

1...a6!

Preparing ...b7-b5 in order to advance the queenside majority.

2 \text{xe3} b5 3 \text{hch1}

The simplifying attempt 3 axb5 axb5 4 b3? failed to 4...c3!.

3...h6

With White lacking an active plan, Black has no reason to hurry.

4 h4 \text{ac8} 5 axb5 axb5 6 \text{e4} \text{b3} 7 \text{c2} \text{a2!}

Keeping up the pressure on the b2-pawn.

8 \text{d2?}

This loses at once. White had to play 8 b3, when 8...\text{a8+!} 9 \text{g1} c3 keeps a clear advantage – Ivanchuk.

8...c3! 9 \text{xc3 b4}

Establishing a decisive pin.

10 \text{a1} \text{d5}+ 11 e4 \text{e6}

White resigned.

\textbf{Position 211}

\textbf{E.Grivas-Z.Ilicnic}

Varna 1994

1...dxe4!

Preparing the advance of the kingside pawn majority. Less convincing is 1...d4?! 2 \text{c4}, followed by \text{d2} and \text{e1-d3}.

2 \text{xe4 f5} 3 \text{d5} \text{e7}

Avoiding 3...\text{e8?!} 4 c6! with counterplay.

4 \text{e2}

Now 4 c6 proves harmless after 4...bxc6 5 \text{xc6} \text{b8}, while 4 0-0? fails to 4...\text{e4} 5 \text{d4} \text{e5!} 6 \text{a2} \text{hxh4 – Ilincic.}

4...\text{e4} 5 \text{d2} \text{e5} 6 \text{a2} \text{f4!}

Gaining more space and preparing \text{g4}+.

7 f3 \text{xf3+}

Less clear is 7...e3?! 8 \text{e4} with a blockade.

8 \text{xf3} \text{e3+!} 9 \text{xf4}

Or 9 \text{f2} \text{g4} 10 \text{f3} \text{f6} 11 \text{c2} \text{d8}, intending ...\text{f5}, with a clear advantage – Ilincic.

9...\text{e2} 10 \text{c4} \text{h5!}

The immediate 10...\text{xg2?! permits 11 \text{f3} \text{g4} 12 \text{h5} with some counterplay.

11 \text{he1} \text{hg2}

Black is clearly better.

\textbf{Position 212}

\textbf{Y.Seirawan-J.Peters}

US Championship, Greenville 1980

1 b4!

Advancing the pawn majority and preparing to activate the last piece by \text{a2-d2}.

1...\text{e8} 2 \text{a2}! \text{a7?}

A strange move. 2...\text{c8} was preferable.

3 \text{e5!} \text{c6} 4 \text{xd7} \text{xd7} 5 \text{e4} \text{f5?}

Black desists from disputing the open file. 5...\text{f6} 6 \text{f3} \text{d8} must have been better.

6 \text{xc6!} \text{bxc6} 7 \text{ad2}

The rook reaches its ideal square and ...e6-e5 is prevented.

7...\text{b6} 8 \text{b3} \text{c5} 9 \text{bxc5} \text{xc5} 10 \text{d6!}

White enjoys an overwhelming advantage: e.g. 10...\text{xd6} 11 \text{xd6} \text{c8} 12 \text{d7}, followed by c5-c6, and the passed pawn decides.
Position 213
W.Wittmann-S.Dolmatov
Frunze 1983

1...e7!
Intending ...f7-f5 and ...e6-e5 to advance the kingside pawn majority. The immediate 1...f5? was less precise due to 2 âxc6! wxc6 3 âxf3, controlling e5.

2 c3?!
Preferable was 2 g3 f5 3 âg2 e5 with just a slight black edge – Dolmatov.

2...f5 3 âc2 e5
Now these two pawns control considerable space, and they can prove useful in a future kingside attack.

4 âf3 âg6 5 g3 b5!
Intending to deploy the bishop on the h1-a8 diagonal, which was weakened by g2-g3.

6 âg5
The beginning of an incorrect combination, but White was short of good options; e.g. 6 âfe1 âb7 7 âxex5? âae8 and Black wins – Dolmatov.

6...h6 7 âd4? exd4 8 âb3+ âh8 9 âwh5 âc6 10 cxd4 âf6
Having a clear extra piece, Black won just a few moves later.

Position 214
D.Seremek-G.Serper
Tilburg 1994

1...a6!
Preparing ...b7-b5 in order to undermine White's pawn majority.

2 âb2 âf8
The immediate 2...b5?! permits 3 cxb5 axb5 4 âf5 âf8 5 âh6+! âh8 6 âg5 with an initiative – Serper.

3 âc1 âh5!
Heading for f4(-d3). Also interesting was 3...b5.

4 âcd1?!
Preventing the ...âf4-d3 manoeuvre in advance, but now Black reverts to his first plan with great effect. 4 g3 was better, with just a slight disadvantage after 4...g6 followed by ...âg7 – Serper.

4...b5! 5 cxb5 axb5 6 âe2 b4!
Fixing the queenside and enabling ...âb5.

7 âd4 âxd4
On 7...âb5?! White had prepared 8 âfd1!.

8 âexd4 âf4 9 âd1 âd8
Black has a more pleasant game. The battle concluded 10 g3? ♙e2+ 11 ♙g2 e5!
12 ♙xе5 ♙е6 13 ♙еf3 ♙е6xd4 14 ♙xd4 ♙c5
15 ♙xe2 ♙xd1 16 ♙c1 and White resigned at the same time.

**Position 216**

C.Bauer-O.Korneev
Pamplona 2006

1 ♙d4!

Using some minor tactics White manages to advance his kingside pawn majority. Less convincing was 1 f4?! ♙c4 with an attack on the e3-pawn.

1...b6

Obviously 1...f6? failed to 2 ♙xa7.

2 f4! e5 3 ♙e4 ♙c6 4 ♙d3!

A clever tactical resource. After 4 ♙xc6 ♙xc6 5 ♙f3 Black can improve his defence by 5...♗b4! – Deviatkin.

4...f5

Or 4...♗xe4 5 ♙xe4 when neither 5...♗d7 6 ♙c6 ♙f6 7 ♙f2, followed by ♙f3
and e3-e4, nor 5...♗c4 6 ♙f2 ♙f8 7 ♙d5
♗d6 8 e4 is at all appealing for Black.

5 ♙xc6 ♙xc6 6 g4! fxg4?!

This converts the e-pawn into a strong passed pawn. 6...♗e7 was a lesser evil.

7 hxg4 g5 8 ♙e4! ♙d8 9 f5

With the strong plan of ♙d5 and e4-e5. The game continued 9...♗f7 10 ♙d5 ♙f8 11 ♙xf7! ♙xf7 12 ♙f2 g6 13 ♙f3 followed by e4-e5 and White won without difficulties.

**Position 217**

M.Botvinnik-V.Smyslov
World Championship (game 12), Moscow 1954

1 ♙xd8! ♙xd8 2 e5!

By handing over the open file White manages to push his kingside pawns.

2...♗d5

2...♗e8 makes little sense after 3 f4, while knight moves like 2...♗d7 permit 3 e6! fxe6 4 ♙xe6+, exposing the black king.

3 ♙xd5 cxd5 4 ♙g2!

Provoking Black’s next move so that a later f4-f5 is effected with tempo. Less convincing is 4 f4?! gxf4 5 gxf4 d4, followed by ...d4-d3.

4...♗e6 5 f4 gxf4 6 gxf4 ♙c6?

This lets White continue his plan, eventually leading to a strong attack. Correct was 6...♖d4! 7 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 8 ♙d1 ♙e6 with just a slightly inferior endgame.

7 f5! ♙c5

Or 7...d4+ 8 ♙g1, followed by ♙g5, with similar play.

8 ♙g5! ♙d7

After 8...f6 9 ♙g2 fxе5 10 b4! ♙d3 11 ♙f6
♗d7 12 ♙e4! White wins – Botvinnik.

9 ♙g1 f6 10 ♙xf6 ♙e4 11 f7+!

Deflecting the rook from the defence of the d5-pawn. The game concluded 11...♖xf7
12 ♙d8+ ♙h7 13 ♙xd5 ♙f2+ 14 ♙g2 ♙f6
15 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 16 ♙xf2 ♙xf5+ 17 ♙f3 ♙f4 18 ♙g4 and Black resigned.

**Position 218**

Pr.Nikolic-Y.Seirawan
Wijk aan Zee 1995

1...♗e7!

Covering the rook on d8 before moving the knight from d7, where it controls the crucial square c5. Instead, the game continued 1...♗f6? 2 ♙xd8+ ♙xd8 3 ♙xd8+ ♙xd8 4 ♙c5! Thus White converts his pawn majority into a passed pawn, besides which the pawn on a5 becomes weak. After 4...♗xc5 5 ♙xc5+ ♙g8 6 ♙f3! ♙d7 7 a3 ♙d7
8 ♙c8+ ♙h7 9 ♙g2! ♙e5 10 ♙e4+ ♙g6 11 ♙h5!
White was better on both flanks and later managed to win.
2 a3 \(\square f6\)

Also possible is 2...\(\square c5\) 3 b4 axb4 4 axb4 \(\square d7\) with a waiting game, but not 4...\(\square a6?!\) 5 \(\text{\textit{\textit{a}3!}}\) and the knight is misplaced on a6.

3 b4

After 3 \(\text{\textit{x}xd8}\) \(\text{\textit{x}xd8}\) 4 \(\text{\textit{x}xd8}\) White doesn’t achieve c4-c5 either, just like in the main line.

3...axb4 4 axb4 \(\text{\textit{x}d4}\) 5 \(\text{\textit{x}d4}\) \(\square f8\)

Preparing ...\(\text{\textit{w}e7}\) with some pressure on the b4-pawn. Black has no problems.

Position 219

A. Lein-R. Kholmov

USSR Team Championship 1967

1...f5!

A first step to a future ...f5-f4, undermining the white pawn chain.

2 \(\text{\textit{e}1}\) \(\text{\textit{e}6}\) 3 \(\text{\textit{b}2}\) \(\text{\textit{g}5}\) 4 a4 \(\text{\textit{f}4}\) 5 \(\text{\textit{d}1}\)

After 5 axb5? f3 Black obtains a strong attack.

5...\(\text{\textit{f}8}\) 6 axb5 axb5 7 \(\text{\textit{a}7}\) \(\text{\textit{c}6}\) 8 \(\text{\textit{a}6}\) \(\text{\textit{d}7}\)!

Black isn’t interested in a draw by repetition and directs his last piece at the enemy kingside.

9 exf4

Or 9 \(\text{\textit{a}7}\) fx3 10 fx3 \(\text{\textit{e}6}\), intending 11 \(\text{\textit{x}d7}\) \(\text{\textit{f}2}\) 12 \(\text{\textit{w}x}f2\) \(\text{\textit{x}f2}\) 13 \(\text{\textit{w}x}f2\) \(\text{\textit{f}5}\) etc.

9...\(\text{\textit{x}xf4}\) 10 \(\text{\textit{e}3}\) \(\text{\textit{d}5}\)

10.g6! 11 \(\text{\textit{g}3}\) is less convincing.

11 \(\text{\textit{a}7}\) \(\text{\textit{c}8}\) 12 \(\text{\textit{c}7}\) \(\text{\textit{d}3}\)!

With a strong initiative.

Position 220

V. Hort-R. Bogdanovic

Sarajevo 1972

1 b5!

Preparing b5-b6 with decisive damage to Black’s pawn chain.

1...h4 2 \(\text{\textit{f}2}\) \(\text{\textit{g}7}\)

Or 2...\(\text{\textit{x}c5}\) 3 \(\text{\textit{w}e5}\) with a crushing advantage.

3 \(\text{\textit{b}6}\) ! \(\text{\textit{x}c5}\)

3...\(\text{\textit{x}xb6}\) 4 \(\text{\textit{c}xd6}\) \(\text{\textit{w}f8}\) 5 \(\text{\textit{w}x}b6\) is equally hopeless.

4 \(\text{\textit{x}c7}\) \(\text{\textit{b}5}\) 5 \(\text{\textit{b}6}\) \(\text{\textit{c}4}\) 6 \(\text{\textit{x}xc4}\) \(\text{\textit{b}xc4}\) 7 \(\text{\textit{x}d7}\)

In view of 7...\(\text{\textit{w}xd7}\) 8 \(\text{\textit{w}b}8\), Black resigned.

Position 221

N. Burnouiu-V. Iordachescu

Bucharest 2003

1...\(\text{\textit{c}5}\)!

Undermining the white pawn chain and enhancing a future queenside attack.

2 \(\text{\textit{c}3}\) \(\text{\textit{c}4}\) 3 \(\text{\textit{d}2}\) \(\text{\textit{d}5}\)

Black moves his focus from the d4-pawn to the one on c3. Due to his crippled pawn structure White is unable to launch a similar attack on the kingside.

4 \(\text{\textit{g}1}\)

Or 4 \(\text{\textit{f}6}\) \(\text{\textit{xf6}\) 5 \(\text{\textit{w}xf6}\) \(\text{\textit{g}8}\) with a clear edge - Lukacs.

4...\(\text{\textit{b}4}\) 5 \(\text{\textit{w}d2}\) \(\text{\textit{c}6}\) 6 \(\text{\textit{f}4}\) \(\text{\textit{d}7}\)!

A clever way of activating the rook on h8. Of course 6...0-0? 7 \(\text{\textit{w}h}5\) had to be avoided.

7 \(\text{\textit{h}3}\) \(\text{\textit{b}3}\)!

A strong pawn sacrifice that is often executed on the opposite flank in the King’s Indian.

8 \(\text{\textit{a}3}\) \(\text{\textit{b}3}\) 9 \(\text{\textit{a}xb3}\) \(\text{\textit{c}4}\) 10 \(\text{\textit{a}2}\) \(\text{\textit{a}5}\)!

White had to try to distract the black pieces from the queenside; e.g. 11 \(\text{\textit{w}f4}\) \(\text{\textit{f}8}\) 12 \(\text{\textit{f}6}\) \(\text{\textit{xf6}\) 13 \(\text{\textit{x}f6}\)? with some remote hope of survival.

11...\(\text{\textit{b}8}\)

Now the threat of 12...\(\text{\textit{b}c4}\) is decisive.

12 \(\text{\textit{f}4}\)!

In view of the multiple threats, White resigned.
Mastering Chess Strategy

Position 222
R.Bar-A.Finkel
Israeli Championship, Tel Aviv 2002

1...f6!
Undermining White’s centre, and clearing the f-file and the a1-h8 diagonal for his own pieces.

2 exf6
After 2 dxc5 bxc5 3 exf6 Wxf6 4 ad1 =ae8, the further advances ...d5-d4 and ...e6-e5 are already on the menu.

2...Wxf6 3 ad1 =ac8 4 ad3
Or 4 =e5 =xe5 5 dxe5 We7 6 g4 =h6, with ideas like ...d5-d4 and ...g6-g5 – Finkel.

4...cxd4 5 =e2 =e3!
Seizing the bishop pair.

6 =xe3 dxe3 7 =xe3 =ce8 8 c3 =h6!
Increasing the pressure on f4 and preparing ...e6-e5.

9 =fd4 =c5
The tempting 9...e5?! permits 10 Wh3! with counterplay.

10 Wh3 =g7 11 =c2 =c8 12 =g3 =d7 13 b3 =e4 14 =xe4 dxe4
Again preparing ...e6-e5, with an excellent game for Black.

Position 223
S.Dolmatov-T.Rakic
Frunze 1983

1 =d3h2!
Preparing Whg4 and f4-f5 with an attack.

1...b5
Perhaps 1...Wd7 2 Whg4 0-0-0 was a safer choice.

2 Whg4 Wd7 3 axb5 axb5 4 =xa8+ =xa8 5 f4!
Now this advance gains strength due to the unsafe position of Black’s king.

5...c7 6 =e3 b4 7 f5! exf5 8 =xf5 =e6 9 =f3 Wa4?
9...0-0 was a lesser evil – Dolmatov.

10 =g5! =f8
Both 10...xg5 11 =d6+ and 10...xg5 11 xg5, followed by e5-e6, are even more unpleasant for Black.

11 Whx4 Wc2 12 =g5
With an extra pawn and a strong attack, White is winning.

Position 224
P.Jaracz-A.Onischuk
Koszalin 1999

1...=e7!
Preparing ...f7-f5 with an attack on the white pawn chain.

2 =xc4 bxc4 3 =fd2 f5! 4 =a3 =f6 5 f3?!
Securing the d5-pawn, but also exposing the kingside. A lesser evil was 5 =xc4 fxe4 6 =xe4 =xd5, when Black is better thanks to his bishop pair and strong centre.

5...=h5!
Now Black’s kingside attack plays itself.

6 =f1 fxe4 7 fxe4 =h4! 8 =e2 Whf6 9 =e3 Whg6
On top of White’s other problems, his e4-pawn has become vulnerable.

10 Whc2 =f4 11 Wxf4 exf4!
Creating the strong threat of ...f4-f3.

12 =xc4 f3 13 =e3
13 d2 =ae8 is equally hopeless – Wedberg.

13...=xd5!
In this desperate position, White resigned.

Position 225
V.Salov-M.Illescas Cordoba
Madrid 1994

1...b5!
Softening up White’s pawn chain before he prevents this idea by 2 a4.

2 a4
Both 2 cxb5?! \(\text{wx}b5\) and 2 c5 \(\text{Qf}6\) expose the d5-pawn.

2...\text{bxc}4 3 \text{bxc}4 \text{b}6

3...\text{Qf}6?!, preparing ...c7-c6, seems even simpler with a faster version of the game.

4 \text{g}4

A lesser evil was 4 a5 bxa5 5 \text{Qxa}5 \text{Qxa}5 6 \text{Qxa}5 c6 – Illescas.

4...\text{c}6!

Converting one of the enemy pawns into a weakness.

5 \text{dxc}6 \text{wx}c6 6 \text{Qb}4?!

Preferable was 6 \text{We}4 \text{We}e4 7 \text{Qxe}4 \text{Qf}6 8 \text{Qe}3 \text{Qf}8 9 \text{Qb}4 with just a slight disadvantage after 9...\text{Qxc}4 10 \text{Qxd}6 e4 – Illescas.

6...\text{Qf}6 7 \text{Qg}3 \text{Qf}8 8 \text{Wb}3 \text{e}4!

Before taking on c4, Black creates new weaknesses in the enemy camp.

9 f4 \text{Wxc}4 10 \text{Wxc}4 \text{Qxc}4 11 \text{Qxd}6 \text{Qd}8!

Preparing a check on d3. Black is clearly better.

\textbf{Position 226}

\textbf{Z.Ribli-M.Petursson}

Reykjavik 1988

1 \text{g}4!

Softening up the black pawns on e4 and f5.

1...\text{fxg}4

After 1...g6?! 2 gxf5 gxf5 3 \text{Qh}3, followed by \text{Qh}1 and \text{Qg}1+, the black king faces big trouble.

2 \text{Qxe}4 \text{Qxe}4

The aggressive 2...\text{Qxb}3? fails to 3 \text{Qc}4! – Ribli.

3 \text{Qxe}4 \text{Qf}6 4 \text{Qxa}5!

Eliminating the most active of Black's minor pieces.

4...\text{Qxa}5 5 \text{Qc}4 \text{Qa}6 6 \text{Qxg}4

With a sound extra pawn, White went on to win.

\textbf{Position 227}

\textbf{A.De Santis-Kr.Georgiev}

Genoa 2006

1...\text{Qe}8!

Preparing ...\text{Qc}7 and ...b7-b5 with queenside activity.

2 \text{Ed}1 \text{Qg}7 3 \text{Qe}2 \text{Qc}7 4 \text{f}4

After 4 a4?! the effect of b7-b5 will be even greater; e.g. 4...b5! 5 cxb5 axb5 6 axb5 \text{Qb}6 followed by ...\text{Qd}7 and ...\text{We}8.

4...\text{Qf}4 5 \text{Qf}4 \text{Qe}5 6 \text{Qe}2 \text{b}5! 7 \text{Qg}2

Obviously 7 cxb5? axb5 8 \text{Qxb}5 \text{Qxb}5 9 \text{Qxb}5 \text{Qxa}2 is very bad for White.

7...\text{Qg}5 8 \text{h}4 \text{Qxe}3 9 \text{Qxe}3 \text{Qd}7 10 \text{h}5 \text{g}5!

Closing the doors for White's kingside attack. From now on a knight on f5 can always be swapped off, whereas Black has interesting attacking prospects on the opposite flank. The game continued 11 \text{Qg}2 h6 12 \text{Qf}1 \text{Qf}7 13 \text{Qcd}1 \text{We}7 14 \text{Wa}5 \text{Wd}8 15 \text{b}3 \text{Qb}8 16 \text{Qb}2 \text{Qc}8 17 \text{Qg}2 \text{We}7 18 \text{Qc}3 \text{Qd}7 19 \text{Qd}3 \text{b}4?!, followed by ...\text{a}5-\text{a}4, with a better game for Black.

\textbf{Position 228}

\textbf{M.Adams-R.Kasimdzhanov}

FIDE World Championship, Tripoli 2004

1 \text{Qh}3\text{h}2!

Preparing f2-f4 with a kingside attack.

1...\text{Qd}8 2 f4 \text{Qf}4

Otherwise White could expand by 3 f5.

3 \text{Qxf}4 \text{We}7 4 \text{Qf}3 \text{f}6 5 \text{Qg}3 \text{Qd}8

Also after 5...\text{Qf}7 6 \text{Qf}1 \text{Qe}7 7 \text{e}5?! Black is in trouble; e.g. 7...\text{dx}e5 8 \text{We}3 \text{Qe}8 9 \text{Qe}4 \text{Qx}h6 10 \text{Qx}h6 \text{Qcd}6 11 \text{Qxc}5 with a clear advantage – Adams.

6 \text{Qf}1 \text{Qe}8 7 \text{Qxf}8 \text{Wxf}8 8 \text{e}5!

A decisive breakthrough.

8...\text{dx}e5

Or 8...\text{fx}e5 9 \text{Wxf}8+ \text{Qxf}8 10 \text{Qxe}5+ \text{Qg}8
11...f7 and wins – Adams.
9...xe5 cd6 10...e1 wg7 11...d3...ac8 12...f2!

The c5-pawn is doomed, e.g. 12...b7 13...e4. White won without major problems.

Position 229
R.Réti-F.Yates
New York 1924

1 d4!

Forcing a favourable alteration of the pawn structure.
1...e4

After 1...exd4?! 2...xd4 or 2...xd4 White is clearly better thanks to the weak d5-pawn and control of the a1-h8 diagonal.

2...e5!...xe5 3 dxex5...h7

Or 3...g4 4 e6!, winning the g7-pawn.

4 f4!

More dynamics. White reinforces the e5-pawn and creates new opportunities on the kingside.

4...exf3 5...xf3...g5 6 f4...h3+

After 6...e4 7...d1 f5 8...xe4 fxe4 9 f5!, followed by 10 e6, Black collapses.

7...h1 d4?

Desperation, but 8...d4 was coming up with a complete restriction of Black's counterplay.

8...xd4...ad8 9...xc6!

A decisive blow.

9...bxc6 10...xc6...f2+ 11...g2...xd4 12...xd4...xd4 13...xe8...e4 14 e6!...d2+ 15...f3

In view of 15...d6 16...c4!, Black resigned.

Position 230
A.Yermolinsky-V.Salov
Wijk aan Zee 1997

1...d5!

Exploiting the exposed position of the queen at e2 in order to break through in the centre.

2...xd5 exd5 3...xd5?

This leads to a complete activation of Black's forces. A lesser evil was 3...f4!...d6 4...xd6...xd6 5...f2 with just a slight disadvantage – Salov.

3...a3! 4...c2...xc3! 5...xc3...xd5 6...d3...c5 7...f4

The only move, since 7...c6?...xc6 8...xd5...xd5 9...xd5 fails to 9...xc1! – Salov.

7...xd3 8...xd3...c5 9...xd5...xd5 10...f5

In a difficult position White decides upon an exchange sacrifice.

10...e4 11...b5...xd3

Not 11...xf5? 12...e3! and White escapes.

12...xd3...xc5 13...c3 f6 14...c4+...h8 15...f7...g8

With 16...we8 next, Black gradually converted his extra material.

Position 231
P.H.Nielsen-E.Agrest
Malmö 2004

1 e4!

Whatever happens next, this advance is bound to create new opportunities.

1...d6

1...xb6? 2 cxb6 followed by...c5 is simply crushing, while after 1...dxe4? 2...xe4 the pressure on c6 is decisive.

2...xd5...d5 3 g5

Thanks to the exchange on d5, the h3-c8 diagonal has become available for White's pieces.

3...d7

Or 3...e8 4...xb5! cxb5 5...xb5...e6 6...h3, followed by...f4.

4...xd5...xd5

After 4...d4 5...xd4 cxd5 6 e6+! fxe6 7
\[
\text{w}xg7+ \text{xc}8 8 \text{w}f6 \text{Black's king is decisively exposed.}
\]

5 \text{xb}5+ \text{e}7 6 \text{b}4

Heading for c6. The game continued 6...\text{f}8 7 \text{c}6 \text{w}c8 8 \text{wb}4 \text{wg}4+ 9 \text{wf}2 \text{wh}4+ 10 \text{we}2 \text{wg}4+ 11 \text{wd}3 \text{aa}8 12 \text{xd}8 \text{xd}8 13 \text{bb}7 and White soon won.

**Position 232**

**M.Illésesca Cordoba-N.Short**

**Pamplona 1999**

1...c5!

A strong advance that liberates both bishops.

2 dxc5

After 2 g3 c4 Black is clearly better – Short.

2...d4! 3 \text{xd}4 \text{xd}4!

The strongest recapture, enabling the future tactical resource ...\text{f}3+.

4 \text{ex}d4 \text{ex}d4 5 \text{h}1

Or 5 \text{cd}1 \text{f}3+ 6 \text{gx}f3 \text{gg}+ and wins.

5...\text{f}3! 6 \text{xd}8+

After 6 \text{dd}1 \text{gg}+! the threat of ...\text{f}4 can’t be parried; e.g. 7 \text{e}2 \text{h}4 8 \text{gx}f3 \text{xf}2 9 \text{g}2 \text{xf}3 10 \text{xf}3 \text{xf}3+ 11 \text{g}1 \text{xe}2 and wins – Short.

6...\text{xd}8 7 \text{c}6 \text{xc}6 8 \text{e}2 \text{wh}4!

With decisive threats at h2 and f2.

9 \text{gf}3 \text{xf}2 10 \text{f}4

If 10 \text{xc}6 \text{xf}1+ 11 \text{g}1, then 11...\text{dd}2 12 \text{gg}6 \text{f}2 with imminent mate.

10...\text{xf}3+ 11 \text{g}2 \text{dd}2 12 \text{g}1 \text{e}4!

In view of 13...\text{xf}4 next, White resigned.

**Position 233**

**A.Suetin-A.Batuev**

**USSR 1949**

1 d5!

Forcing a favourable alteration of the pawn structure.

1...cxd5

After 1...\text{xd}5? 2 \text{e}8+ \text{h}7 3 \text{xf}5+ White wins a piece.

2 \text{d}4 \text{f}6?!

2...\text{f}8 was more solid, when 3 \text{xf}5 \text{f}6 4 \text{c}3 yields White a small but enduring advantage.

3 \text{xe}6 \text{xe}6 4 \text{xe}6 \text{e}5

Since 4...g6? fails to 5 \text{b}5, the f5-pawn can’t be saved.

5 \text{xf}5 \text{c}6 6 \text{c}3 \text{xc}3 7 \text{bxc}3

Thanks to his extra pawn and strong bishop, White is clearly better.

**Position 234**

**Y.Shulman-W.Paschall**

**Philadelphia 2003**

1...b5!

Preparing the strong breakthrough ...d6-d5. The immediate 1...d5?! is less convincing due to 2 \text{ex}d5 \text{ex}d5 3 f5 \text{wa}8 4 \text{xd}5 \text{xd}5 5 cxd5.

2 \text{cxb}5 \text{d}5!

The most active follow-up, though the simple 2...axb5!? also looks sensible.

3 e5

3 f5 is well met by 3...\text{wa}8, while both 3 \text{bx}a6?! \text{xa}6 and 3 \text{cx}d5 \text{xd}5 just help Black to activate his pieces.

3...\text{ce}4 4 \text{xe}4 \text{xe}4 5 \text{xe}4

In this position a draw was agreed, but Black had every reason to keep on playing; i.e. 5...\text{xe}4 6 \text{d}4 axb5 with 6...d5 and 7...\text{cd}8 or even 6...g6-g5!? coming up.

**Position 235**

**I.Boleslavsky-R.Fine**

**USSR-USA radio match 1945**

1 c5!

Fixing weak pawns on d6 and c6. Less
convincing is 1...\( \text{a}e3 \) ! c5 2...\( \text{a}xd7+ \text{w}xd7 \), with ...\( \text{c}c6-d4 \) coming up.

1...\( \text{c}c8 \)

After 1...\( \text{d}xc5 \) 2...\( \text{a}e3 \) White soon recovers the pawn with a clear positional advantage, while 1...\( \text{d}5 \) 2...\( \text{e}xd5 \text{c}xd5 \) fails to 3...\( \text{c}xd5 \text{a}xd5 \text{b}b4 \text{a}x\text{a}4 \text{w}e4+ \) etc.

2...\( \text{a}e3 \) 0-0 3...\( \text{w}d8 \rightarrow \text{e}7 \) 4...\( \text{a}d1 \) \( \text{a}e8 \) !

4...\( \text{d}8 \) first was preferable, connecting the rooks.

5...\( \text{f}4 \) !

In view of Black’s badly coordinated pieces, White sharpens the game.

5...\( \text{f}5 \) !

This won’t end well, but it was difficult to find a good remedy to the \( \text{f}4-\text{f}5 \) threat.

6...\( \text{e}f5 \text{g}x\text{f}5 \) 7...\( \text{f}e1 \text{d}xc5 \) 8...\( \text{f}2 \text{d}6 \) 9...\( \text{a}xc5 \text{w}d8 \) 10...\( \text{a}d4 \) !

Swapping Black’s main defender.

10...\( \text{a}xd4 \) 11...\( \text{w}d4 \)

With moves like \( \text{a}e3-g3 \) and \( \text{b}b3 \) coming up, White has an overwhelming advantage.

**Position 237**

**W.Uhlmann-L.Portisch**

Skopje/Ohrid 1968

1...\( \text{a}4 \) !

Creating new opportunities on the queenside.

1...\( \text{b}xc4 \) 2...\( \text{a}5 \) !

Speeding up the \( \text{d}a4-b6 \) plan. After 2...\( \text{xc}4 \) ! ...\( \text{f}8 \) 3...\( \text{a}5 \text{c}xc5 \) 4...\( \text{b}xc5 \text{w}e7 \) 5...\( \text{a}4 \text{xd}1 \) 6...\( \text{xd}1 \) \( \text{b}d8 \) Black defends rather well.

2...\( \text{d}x\text{d}1 \)

Or 2...\( \text{f}8 \) 3...\( \text{a}4 \) and the knight is ready to recapture on \( c5 \).

3...\( \text{d}x\text{d}1 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 4...\( \text{a}4 \) \( \text{f}8 \)

After 4...\( \text{d}d8 \) ! 5...\( \text{xc}4 \text{d}x\text{c}5 \) 6...\( \text{xc}5 \) the \( a6 \)-pawn becomes exposed.

5...\( \text{xc}4 \text{e}6 \) 6...\( \text{b}6 \) \( \text{b}8 \) !

This leads to unexpected tactical problems, but after 6...\( \text{d}8 \) 7...\( \text{xe}6 \text{f}x\text{e}6 \) 8...\( \text{c}4 \)

Black is also suffering – Portisch.

7...\( \text{d}6 \) ! \( \text{d}4 \)

The natural 7...\( \text{f}8 \) fails to 8...\( \text{d}7 \) !.

8...\( \text{a}2 \) !

With the decisive threat of 9...\( \text{d}7 \), which can’t be parried by 8...\( \text{c}8 \) due to 9...\( \text{f}7+ \) \( \text{w}xf7 \) 10...\( \text{d}8 \) !. Therefore Black resigned.

**Position 238**

**K.Rasmussen-J.Hellsten**

Gistrup 1996

1...\( \text{f}5 \) !

Gaining some space and preventing the plan of \( e4-e5 \) and \( \text{d}e4-d6 \). Also possible is 1...\( \text{wc}7 \)! 2...\( \text{e}5 \) \( \text{f}5 \) ! in the same spirit.

2...\( \text{exf}5 \)

2...\( \text{d}1 \) permits 2...\( \text{f}4 \) 3...\( \text{c}1 \) \( \text{f}3 \) 4...\( \text{g}3 \)

With a strong initiative, while after 2...\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{w}a5 \) 3...\( \text{a}1 \) \( \text{f}xe4 \), both 4...\( \text{xe}4 \) \( \text{xe}3 \) 5...\( \text{xe}3 \) \( \text{w}xa2 \) and 4...\( \text{f}xe4 \) \( \text{xf}1+ \) 5...\( \text{xf}1 \) \( \text{xf}8 \) ! leave Black on top.

2...\( \text{exf}5 \) !
Instead, the game saw 2...\textit{xf5?} 3 a4! \textit{w}d7 4 axb5 \textit{cx}b5 5 \textit{fb}1 \textit{wc}6 6 \textit{wd}3 \textit{d}d8 7 d5 with a strong white initiative.

3 \textit{ad}1

Both 3 d5 \textit{f}6 and 3 \textit{w}f3 \textit{f}4! 4 \textit{xf}4 \textit{xd}4 lead to problems for White.

3...\textit{f}6 4 \textit{f}3 \textit{d}7

Preparing ...\textit{ad}8, with a more active game for Black.

\textbf{Position 239}

\textbf{J.Hellsten-Zhang Zhong}

Yerevan Olympiad 1996

1 h3!

Preparing g3-g4 to soften up Black’s kingside.

1...\textit{e}5

After 1...\textit{xd}4 2 exd4 \textit{f}6 3 g4! fxg4 4 \textit{be}1 gxh3 5 \textit{wh}3 Black is also under pressure.

2 g4! fxg4 3 hxg4 \textit{d}8

If 3...\textit{e}4?, then 4 \textit{hxg7} \textit{wg}7 5 \textit{e}6! and White wins.

4 \textit{f}4! g5 5 \textit{f}5!

Instead, the game continued 5 \textit{xe}4 \textit{g}6 6 \textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 7 \textit{xe}5 \textit{xb}1 8 \textit{xb}8 \textit{xc}6 h6 and White’s unsafe king made it difficult for him to progress.

5...\textit{xd}4!

The only defence, and the move that worried me during the game.

6 exd4 \textit{xe}4 7 \textit{g}3!

Surrendering the d4-pawn in order to create a double threat at g4 and b8.

7...\textit{xd}4+ 8 \textit{h}1

In this complex position White keeps some winning chances; e.g. 8...\textit{f}2+ 9 \textit{xf}2 \textit{xc}5 10 \textit{f}5! \textit{xb}4 11 \textit{xb}4 \textit{xb}4 12 \textit{e}5! \textit{w}f8 13 \textit{wg}5+ \textit{g}6 14 \textit{xe}4.

\textbf{Position 240}

\textbf{J.Klinger-M.Wahls}

Dortmund 1989

1...b5!

Unlocking White’s queenside in order to enhance an attack on the exposed king on h2.

2 axb5 axb5 3 \textit{cb}5 \textit{d}5! 4 \textit{d}2 \textit{d}6

With the simple threat of 5...\textit{xb}5.

5 b6

After 5 \textit{e}2 \textit{c}2! or 5 \textit{dc}2 \textit{xb}5 6 \textit{dc}1 \textit{d}4! 7 exd4 \textit{xd}4 8 \textit{a}2 \textit{e}2 Black is winning – Wahls.

5...\textit{xb}6 6 \textit{a}4?!

This lets the black queen enter on the light squares, but after 6 \textit{b}2 \textit{b}4 7 \textit{cb}1 \textit{e}4 8 \textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 White also had a hopeless game.

6...\textit{wb}5 7 \textit{c}3 \textit{xc}3! 8 \textit{xc}3 \textit{we}2+ 9 \textit{g}1 \textit{xc}3 10 \textit{w}f2 \textit{we}3 11 \textit{xe}3 \textit{xe}3

White resigned.

\textbf{Position 241}

\textbf{B.Lalic-M.Turner}

Metz 1998

1 b4!

A clever attack on Black’s pawn chain.

1...bxc4

Or 1...cxb4 2 c5! with similar consequences.

2 bxc5 dxc5 3 \textit{a}5!

The simplest follow-up, in order to recover the pawn at once, after which the bishop pair becomes terrific.

3 \textit{f}6 4 \textit{e}6+ \textit{h}8 5 \textit{xc}5 \textit{wc}7 6 \textit{xf}8 \textit{xa}5 7 \textit{d}6 \textit{e}8 8 \textit{e}2

Of course not 8 \textit{xe}5? \textit{xe}6 – Lalic.

8...\textit{e}4 9 \textit{we}3

With the decisive threat of 10 \textit{wd}4.

9...\textit{b}7 10 \textit{wd}4 \textit{wd}8 11 \textit{e}5 \textit{g}7 12 \textit{a}1

Black resigned.
Mastering Chess Strategy

Position 242
V.Korchnoi-L.Portisch
Brussels 1986

1...e5!
A strong advance that will leave Black in command of the centre.

2 dxe5 dxe5 3 ℎ2
3 ℎc2 seems more natural, when 3...e4 4 d4 e5! 5 ™xe4 ™xe4 6 ™xe4 ™xc4 yields Black a more pleasant game. Obviously his knight is immune due to mate.

3...e4 4 d4 e5!
Heading for the protected square at d3.

5 ™h3?!
A lesser evil was 5 ™xe4!? ™xe4 6 ™xe4 ™f3+ 7 ™xf3 ™xe4 8 ™xe4 − Portisch.

5...g7 6 d3?
A tactical slip in time trouble. After 6 d5 ™d7 7 ™exe5 ™xe5 Black remains on top, but his strong knight is gone.

6...d3 7 ™xf6 ™f4! 8 ™e3 ™h3+ 9 ™xh3 ™xf6 10 ™xe4 ™g7
Black later realized his material advantage.

Position 243
M.Jonsson-J.Hellsten
Helsingborg 1991

1...b5!
An unexpected advance that softens up the c4 and d5 squares for the black pieces. In contrast, 1...c5 2 exd4 or 1...dxe3 2 ™xe3 just leads to sterile equality.

2 exd4
Also after 2 cxb5 ™xe5 3 exd4 ™d5+, followed by ...fd8, or 2 ™e2 bxc4 3 bxc4 dxe3 4 ™xe3 ™b6, preparing ...c7 and ...fd8, Black has a more active game.

2...bxc4 3 bxc4 ™b6!
Not 3...c5? 4 ™e2! and Black's previous efforts were in vain.

4 ™ac1?
Simply blundering a pawn. Correct was 4 ™d3 cxd4 5 ™xd4 ™xc4 with a slightly better endgame for Black.

4...™xc4! 5 ™c3 ™d5+ 6 ™g1 ™xb2 7 ™xb2 cxd4
Black later realized his extra pawn.

Position 244
D.Howell-V.Epishin
Lake George 2005

1 b4!
An unexpected advance that drastically alters the balance of the position.

1...cxd4
After 1...b6 2 ™a4! White is soon able to land a knight on c6, while 1...cxb4 2 axb4 ™xb4? fails to 3 ™xf6 ™xc3 4 ™g4 h5 5 ™h6+ ™h7 6 ™xg6+ with a decisive attack.

2 exd4 ™d7 3 ™xd7 ™xd7 4 ™e3
White has emerged with a mobile pawn majority on the queenside.

4...™de8 5 c5! f5
Weakening the a2-g8 diagonal, but it was not easy to find a constructive plan.

6 d5! exd5 7 ™xd5 ™d8 8 ™d4 ™e6
After 8...™e5 9 ™b3 ™h8 10 ™c7! ™xc7 11 ™xe5+ ™xe5 12 ™xd7 Black is also suffering, but now he loses the exchange.

9 ™a4 ™f7 10 ™xe8 ™xe8 11 ™f6+ ™xf6 12 ™xf6
White later realized his material advantage.

Position 245
J.Hellsten-B.Avrukh
Kavala 2003

1 f4!
Preparing to create new opportunities with f4-f5. Despite the extra pawn White is worse here due to his inferior pawn struc-
ture, so he should act dynamically. The game instead saw 1 f3? e6 2 d4? (it was not yet too late for 2 f4!) 2...a6 3 a4 c4 4 c6 bxc6 5 a1 (avoiding a fork on b2) 5...c5 6 e2 b6! 7 b3 xe2 8 xe2 xe3 and Black later realized his extra pawn.

1...e6

Preparing ...f8xc5 just as in the game. 1...c4 2 axc4! axc4 3 d7 and 1...xe2 2 xe2 xc3 3 c2 cause White fewer worries.

2 f5! exf5 3 exf5 f8

Or 3...c4 4 a4! cxc4 5 d4 f8 6 f4!, followed by 7 d5. After the text the knight also finds a good route.

4 g3! a5 5 a4 a5 6 e4 a3

The immediate 6...xf5? runs into 7 d6.

7 axb3 a5

Or 7...c7 8 f6!, restricting Black's kingside.

8 d6 h5 9 a7

With ideas like e7 and c3-c4, White is by no means worse in the endgame.

Position 247

H.Mecking-Y.Seirawan

Match (game 4), Sao Paulo 1992

1 g4!

Restricting the knight on h6. In contrast, the game continued 1 e6? f5! 2 c2 g6 with counterplay for Black, whose knight has an excellent destiny on d4.

1...c5

Preparing ...a5. Other moves, such as 1...g6, can be met by 2 e6! just like in the main line.

2 e4

In view of Black's plan, White improves his queen.

2...a6 3 e3 g7

If 3...g8, then 4 e6! with similar play.

4 e6! f6

Or 4...fxe6 5 c3+, preparing a6xe6 with a strong initiative.

5 a4!

Intending a4-a5 with a second front. White is better overall.

5 c4

Now d5-d6 is inevitable, since 5...d6? fails to 6 a3.

5...c7 6 d6 e6 7 a3 g7 8 e1! g5

Or 8...d7 9 xd7 xd7 10 xe6 xc6 11 xe6, preparing d4-d5 and a2.b2.

9 a3 f6

After 9...d4 10 xf7! xd3 11 xd8+ e6 12 xe6 xe1 13 xg7+ xg7 14 e6 the passed pawn soon decides – Zakharevich.

10 a3 g7 11 f3 f6 12 d7!

In view of 12...xd7 13 xd7 xd7 14 xg6+ xg6 15 g6+ h8 16 h3, Black resigned.

Position 248

I.Zakharevich-L.Guliev

St. Petersburg 1997

1 a4!

This exchange sacrifice completely changes the logic of the position. Now the threat is 2 h4. Less convincing was 1 g5?! a5 or 1 h2?! a7, followed by ...ac8.

1...c5

This lets the white knight occupy the newly created post on e5. 2...d7 3 a6h6 c8 was preferable, when 4 a3 d6 5 d5 dxd5 6 e4 keeps a clear initiative.

3 c6 a5 4 d2! f8

Or 4...xd5 5 xd5 a6h6 xd4 6 xg6! fxg6 7 xg6+ h8 8 a2! and wins – Zakharevich.
Mastering Chess Strategy

Position 248
S.Furman-L.Polugaevsky
USSR Championship, Moscow 1969

1  
Restricting the knight on b8. Other good options were 1 1 5!? or 1 1 b3!? in the same spirit.

1...e7 2 b3

In order to double rooks at some moment, Black can hardly undertake anything.

2...g5 3 5 3 f6 4 g6!

A key move that keeps up the pressure.

4...d6 5 xd6 xd6 6 e7+ f7

Or 6...h6 7 h3! with c2+ next – Belov.

7 f5

Exploiting the fresh protected square. Meanwhile, Black still can’t develop his knight or queen’s rook.

7...e6 8 c1! h5 9 h3 h4 10 c7+ f8

Or 10...g6 11 f3! with a mating attack.

11 e3!

Swapping the defender on e6.

11...xe3 12 xe3 d3 13 c2+ f7 14 xd5 1-0

Position 249
B.Engisch-W.Steinicz
London 1883

1...b6!

Preventing ...c7-c5 in order to restrict White’s minor pieces.

2 h3

After 2 d4!? e2 3 f3 f5 4 f2 de8 the command of the second rank yields Black some advantage.

2...e6 3 fd1

Now after 3 d4?! xb3 4 axb3 xd4 5 cxd4 a5 the rook endgame is clearly favourable to Black, while the attempt to avoid it by 4 xg7? fails tactically to 4 c4.

3 c5! 4 g5?!

This just helps Black in gaining space and approaching with his king, but White was short of prospects anyway.

4 f6 5 f4 f7

There followed 6 f3 g5 7 xd8 xd8 8 e3 h6 9 e1 f5 10 f4 f6 11 g3 a5 12 c1 a4 13 a3 c4, restricting the white knight with a huge advantage.

Position 250
V.Eingorn-H.Jonkman
Metz 2003

1 a5!

Preventing an enemy attack with ...b5-b4 and ...a5-a4.

1...ae8 2 h3 h8 3 g4?!

The most consistent choice. In contrast, the game continued 3 a1 g6 4 b1 f7 5 d2 e7 6 c1 c8 7 d1 h6 8 c2 e8 9 dc1 f8 10 a3 e5 with unclear play.

3...h4

By attacking f2 Black interferes with the plan of d1 and g4-g5.

4 d1 e5

A less active defence permits 5 f3 with central activity.

5 dxe5 xe5 6 f4 b8 7 b2

Preparing c3 with a promising attack.

Position 251
G.Kasparov-S.Gligoric
Lucerne Olympiad 1982

1 f3!

An excellent measure of restriction, which takes the e4-square away from several black pieces, and soon d5 as well.

1...c7

Or 1...f5 2 c3 b7 3 e4, keeping the advantage.
2 e4 a8 3 b5!

Fixing a target on a7. We can also notice that the bishop on a8 has turned into a very passive piece.

3...@e8 4 @a4 f5

This leads to new weaknesses, but Black was short of constructive ideas.

5 @b3! @c8 6 exf5 @c5+?

Now White manages to swap the active enemy queen. Preferable was 6...@xf5 7 @c3 with a clear, though not decisive advantage – Kasparov.

7 @f1 @d5 8 @a3l @xa3 9 @xa3 exf5 10 @c5 @c8 11 @c6! @f7

Or 11...@xc6 12 @c4+!, followed by b5xc6, when Black is terribly passive.

12 @xa7 @xa7 13 @xa7

White later realized his extra pawn.

**Position 252**

*M.Euwe-S.Reshevsky*

World Championship, The Hague/Moscow 1948

1...@e4! 2 @b2 f6!

Restricting the enemy bishop and parrying the threat of 3 b5. In contrast, 2...axb4? 3 axb4 is illogical since it opens the a-file for the white rooks.

3 b5 @e7

The b2-bishop is no longer impressive, while the c4-pawn has turned into a weakness, something that Black soon exploits.

4 @fd1 @d6 5 @f1 @c8! 6 @d1

At this point 6...@c5! 7 @c2 @b6, followed by ...@ad8, leads to a clear black advantage – Keres.

**Position 253**

*J.Hellsten-P.Mueller*

Hallsberg 1991

1...@g4?

After this the bishop on b6 becomes eternally isolated. Black should have preferred 1...@xe3+! 2 fxe3 a5 with just a slight disadvantage.

2 d4! @xe3 3 fxe3

Now White is basically a piece up.

3...@f8 4 @hf1 @e7 5 @c2

Opening a new front on the kingside with a big advantage.

**Position 254**

*A.Morozевич-A.Petrushin*

Krasnodar 1997

1 @e2!

A simple but strong restrictive measure. Other moves, such as 1 @f4?!l, permit 1...@a6! perhaps followed by ...@d3-g6, and Black drastically improves his worst piece.

1...@f5

Worried about a potential attack on his king, Black accepts an inferior pawn structure. If 1...@d7, preparing ...@c6-b5, then White should avoid 2 @c2?! in view of 2...@a6l, and instead consider 2 g4 @c6 3 g5 @b5 4 @f3, intending g2-g3, @g2 and @h1 with attacking chances.

2 exf6 @xf6 3 @d3 @d7 4 @f4

A good diagonal for the bishop, where it prevents a liberating...@e6-e5 advance.

4...@c6 5 @c2 @g6 6 @ad1 @b5 7 @d2 @a6 8 @b1 @c6 9 @e5!

Swapping Black’s “good” bishop in order to exploit his dark square weaknesses more efficiently.

9...@xe5 10 @xe5 @g7 11 @de1

White is clearly better.
Restricting the bishop on f1. It is worth observing that, in the absence of knights, White is unable to exploit the blockading square on d4. Less good was 1...\(\text{\underline{x}}\)e5? 2 \(\text{\underline{b}}\)5+ or 1...\(\text{\underline{e}}\)7?! 2 c4! d4 3 f4 followed by \(\text{\underline{g}}\)2.

2 f4 g6!

Preventing f4-f5.

3 \(\text{\underline{b}}\)1 h5 4 \(\text{\underline{h}}\)4 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)7 5 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)5?

A senseless sacrifice, but after 5 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)xe7 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xe7 Black is also clearly better thanks to his superior minor piece.

5...\(\text{\underline{x}}\)xg5 6 fxg5 \(\text{\underline{a}}\)xe5 7 \(\text{\underline{w}}\)e3 0-0

A sound extra pawn up, Black went on to win without major problems.

**Position 256**

A.Karpov-A.Yusupov

USSR Championship, Moscow 1983

1 \(\text{\underline{c}}\)c5!

Preventing Black's only active idea, ...\(\text{\underline{a}}\)a5-c4. Besides which, a doubling of rooks with \(\text{\underline{b}}\)c2 is enabled.

1...\(\text{\underline{e}}\)7

Or 1...\(\text{\underline{e}}\)a7 2 \(\text{\underline{b}}\)c2 \(\text{\underline{a}}\)a6 3 \(\text{\underline{h}}\)2 is similar.

2 \(\text{\underline{h}}\)2!

Preparing a kingside advance with g2-g4, f2-f4 and f4-f5.

2...\(\text{\underline{x}}\)f5?

This simply drops a pawn. Preferable was 2...c6 with just a slight disadvantage – Yusupov.

3 \(\text{\underline{b}}\)c2! \(\text{\underline{g}}\)6 4 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xc7 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xc7 5 \(\text{\underline{xc}}\)7

With a sound extra pawn, White went on to win.

**Position 257**

I.Radulov-H.Westerinen

Helsinki 1972

1 \(\text{\underline{a}}\)xb7! \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xb7 2 \(\text{\underline{c}}\)c6!

White has managed to isolate the enemy rook on b7.

2...\(\text{\underline{c}}\)a8 3 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xf6!

With every exchange the inferiority of that rook will make itself more strongly felt.

3...\(\text{\underline{x}}\)xf6 4 f5!

Softening up the light squares.

4...\(\text{\underline{e}}\)5

In the event of 4...exf5, one of several tempting replies is 5 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)e7+! \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xe7 6 \(\text{\underline{xe}}\)7, followed by \(\text{\underline{dd}}\)7.

5 b4!

Prophylaxis against the ...b6-b5 advance, which from now on will be met by c4-c5.

5...\(\text{\underline{g}}\)7 6 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)e4 h5 7 \(\text{\underline{h}}\)4

Black has been deprived of any counterplay.

7...\(\text{\underline{g}}\)8 8 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d2 \(\text{\underline{h}}\)6 9 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)1 \(\text{\underline{bb}}\)8

Desperation in a difficult position.

10 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xb8 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)b4+ 11 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)e2 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xb8 12 g4

White went on to win.

**Position 258**

Mil.Pavlovic-V.Akopian

Gibraltar 2007

1...b6!

Restricting White's intended queenside advance, which could have become real after 1...\(\text{\underline{a}}\)xa3? 2 \(\text{\underline{c}}\)c2, followed by \(\text{\underline{a}}\)2-a3 and b3-b4.

2 \(\text{\underline{xc}}\)5 bxc5 3 \(\text{\underline{a}}\)3 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d6 4 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)5

Or 4 \(\text{\underline{c}}\)c2 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)6 5 \(\text{\underline{w}}\)d2 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d7, preparing ...\(\text{\underline{de}}\)5, with pressure on d3.

4...\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d7 5 \(\text{\underline{xd}}\)d7 \(\text{\underline{xd}}\)d7 6 \(\text{\underline{b}}\)1 f5!

Speeding up the kingside play before White consolidates with \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d2-f3. Now 7 f4 runs into 7...g5! 8 fxg5 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)6 9 \(\text{\underline{w}}\)f3 with a strong initiative.

7 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d2 f4 8 g4

If 8 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)e4, then simply 8...\(\text{\underline{w}}\)e5.

8...f3?! 9 \(\text{\underline{xf}}\)3 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)6 10 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)5 \(\text{\underline{f}}\)4

Preparing ...h7-h5 with an attack. Thanks to his powerful knight, Black enjoys good compensation for the pawn.
Position 259

**V.Eingorn-E.Agrest**

European Club Cup, Chalkidiki 2002

1 \( \text{Waxa6} \) \( \text{Bxa6} \) 2 h6!

In order to imprison Black’s bishop just before he vacates the f8-square by ...\( \text{Fe8} \) or \( \text{Fc8} \). In contrast, the more aggressive 1 \( \text{We3?!} \) \( \text{Cxc6} \) 2 \( \text{Wf4} \) permitted 2...\( \text{Bb4!} \) with counterplay.

2...\( \text{Bb8} \) 3 \( \text{Bh2} \) f6 4 f4! \( \text{fxe5} \) 5 \( \text{fxe5} \) \( \text{Bc7} \)

Or 5...\( \text{Bac8} \) 6 \( \text{Bf3} \) \( \text{Bc2} \) 7 \( \text{Bd2} \) \( \text{Bc7} \) 8 \( \text{Bc1} \) with a clear edge – Ftcn. 4...\( \text{Bac8} \) can be met in similar fashion.

6 \( \text{Bxe3} \)

From now White is basically a piece up and should just try to neutralize Black’s temporary initiative.

6...\( \text{Bb5} \) 7 \( \text{Bd2} \) \( \text{Bac8} \) 8 \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{Bc3} \) 9 \( \text{Bhc1} \) \( \text{Be4+} \) 10 \( \text{Bd3} \) \( \text{Bf7} \) 11 \( \text{Bf3} \) \( \text{Be6} \) 12 \( \text{Bg5+!} \)

Swapping the more active (to say the least) of Black’s minor pieces. This also helps to improve his own bishop,

12...\( \text{Bxg5} \) 13 \( \text{Bxg5} \) \( \text{Bf5} \) 14 \( \text{Bxe7}! \) \( \text{Bxe8} \) 15 \( \text{Bxc8} \) \( \text{Bxc8} \) 16 \( \text{Bf1+} \) \( \text{Be6} \)

Since 16...\( \text{Bg4} \) fails to 17 \( \text{Bf8} \) \( \text{Bxf8} \) 18 \( \text{Bxf8} \) \( \text{Bg3} \) 19 \( \text{Bg7!} \), Black has to go passive.

17 \( \text{Bd6} \) a6 18 \( \text{g4} \) g5 19 \( \text{Bf5} \) \( \text{Bg8} \) 20 \( \text{Bxa3} \)

Finally Black is in zugzwang. There followed 20...\( \text{Bg6} \) 21 \( \text{Bf8} \) \( \text{Bg8} \) 22 \( \text{Bb4} \) a5 23 \( \text{Bd6} \) \( \text{Bc8} \) 24 \( \text{Bxg5} \) and White soon won.

Position 260

**G.Vescovi-S.Skeembris**

Copenhagen 1995

1 d6!

Imprisoning three black pieces on a6, a8 and b8. Other moves, such as 1 \( \text{Wd2?!} \), permit 1...\( \text{d6} \) and Black is fine.

1...\( \text{Bb7} \)

Here or later, 1...\( \text{Bxa3} \) 2 \( \text{Bxa3} \) doesn’t change anything.

2 \( \text{Wd3} \) \( \text{Bxe8} \) 3 \( \text{Bf1} \)

Overprotecting the crucial \( \text{d6} \)-pawn.

3...\( \text{Bc6} \) 4 \( \text{Bxe1} \) \( \text{Wg6} \)

White was ready to meet 4...\( \text{Bc6} \) by 5 \( \text{Bc4} \).

5 \( \text{Wg3}! \)

Very clever. It is worth a pawn to swap off Black’s active pieces, so that he is left with only bad ones. Now 5...\( \text{Wxe4?} \) fails to 6 \( \text{Bf3} \).

5...\( \text{Wxg3} \) 6 \( \text{hxg3} \) \( \text{Bxe4} \) 7 \( \text{Bf3!} \) \( \text{Bxf3} \) 8 \( \text{Bxf3} \) \( \text{e4} \) 9 \( \text{f4} \)

Despite his minus pawn, White is winning.

9...\( \text{Bxa3} \) 10 \( \text{Bxa3} \) \( \text{f5} \) 11 \( \text{Bc2} \) \( \text{Bf7} \) 12 \( \text{Bc3} \) \( \text{g6} \) 13 \( \text{g4}! \)

Opening a new front on the kingside.

13...\( \text{fxg4} \) 14 \( \text{Bxg4} \)

The game continued 14...\( \text{h5} \) 15 \( \text{Bc5+} \) \( \text{Bxe8} \) 16 \( \text{Bh2} \) g5 17 \( \text{Bh3} \) \( \text{gxh4+} \) 18 \( \text{Bxf4} \) \( \text{Bf6} \) 19 \( \text{Bxe4} \) \( \text{fxe4} \) 20 \( \text{Bg1} \) \( \text{Bxd6} \) 21 \( \text{Bxd6+} \) \( \text{Bf8} \) 22 \( \text{Baf1} \) and White soon won.

Position 261

**M.Taimanov-M.Najdorf**

Candidates Tournament, Zürich 1953

1...\( \text{b5}! \)

Before getting on with the kingside attack, Black prevents the opponent’s idea of 2 \( \text{Bc4} \). In contrast, after 1...\( \text{g7?!} \) 2 \( \text{Bc4} \) \( \text{d4} \) 3 \( \text{Bxd6} \), followed by \( \text{Bf5} \), White obtains counterplay.

2 \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{a6}! \)

From now on the knight remains badly placed on d2.

3 \( \text{axb5} \) \( \text{axb5} \) 4 \( \text{Bc7} \) \( \text{Bg7} \)

Finally Black is able to resume his attack.

5 \( \text{Bb3} \) \( \text{Bh4} \) 6 \( \text{Bc2} \) \( \text{Bh3}! \) 7 \( \text{Wf2} \)

Or 7 \( \text{gxh3?!} \) \( \text{Bh1+} \) 8 \( \text{Bxg1} \) \( \text{Bxg1+} \) 9 \( \text{Bh2} \) \( \text{Bxf3} \) mate.

7...\( \text{Bxg2} \) 8 \( \text{Bxg2} \) \( \text{Bxg2+} \) 9 \( \text{Bxg2} \) \( \text{Bh4} \)

Now White can’t save his queen, since
both 10 \textit{We}2 and 10 \textit{Wf}1 run into 10...\textit{Qg}3+. The game concluded 10 \textit{Wxg7+} \textit{Kxg7} 11 \textit{Qg2+} \textit{Kh8} 12 \textit{Qe1} \textit{Qf4} 13 \textit{Qg3} \textit{Qf2} 14 \textit{Qg4} \textit{Wh3} 15 \textit{Qd2} \textit{h5} 16 \textit{Qg5} and White resigned before the resumption in view of 16...\textit{Qg8} with mate to come.

\textit{Position 262}

\textbf{M.Botvinnik-B.Kurajica}

\textit{Hastings 1966/67}

\textbf{1 Qc1!}

Before going e4-e5, White prevents any counterplay with ...\textit{Qh5-f4}. Less convincing is 1 e5?! \textit{Qf4}! 2 \textit{Qc2} \textit{Qg6}, when 3 \textit{Qc1}? fails to 3...\textit{Qxg2}! – Botvinnik.

\textbf{1...Qed8}

Parrying the threat of 2 exd5. 1...\textit{g6}? failed to 2 exd5, while after 1...\textit{Qad8}? 2 exd5 \textit{Qxe1} 3 \textit{Qxe1} the pawn can’t be recovered by 3...\textit{Qxd5}? due to 4 \textit{Qe8}+.

\textbf{2 e5 \textit{Qg6} 3 f4!}

Preparing \textit{Qf3}, to the concern of the h4-pawn.

\textbf{3...\textit{Wg4} 4 \textit{Qf3} \textit{Qe8}}

Or 4...\textit{h3} 5 \textit{Qxh3} \textit{Qxf4} 6 \textit{Qxf4} \textit{Wxf4} 7 \textit{Qf3} \textit{Qg5} 8 \textit{Qg3} and wins – Botvinnik.

\textbf{5 \textit{Qe1} \textit{Rad8} 6 \textit{h3} \textit{Qg6} 7 \textit{Qxh4}}

Having a sound extra pawn, White went on to win.

\textit{Position 263}

\textbf{E.Geller-A.Mikhailchishin}

\textit{USSR Championship, Tbilisi 1978}

\textbf{1 \textit{Qxc6!}}

White aims to restrict the black knight by \textit{g2-g4}, and for this idea to work he must first swap a few pieces. 1 \textit{Qxc6}?! is less precise due to 1...\textit{Qf5}!.

\textbf{1...\textit{Qxc6} 2 \textit{Qxc6} \textit{Qxc6} 3 \textit{Qd7}!}

A useful move, now that 3...\textit{Qf5}? fails to 4 \textit{Qxf5}. The immediate 3 \textit{g4}?! permits 3...\textit{Qd8}! 4 \textit{Qxd8+} \textit{Qxd8} 5 \textit{Qd1} \textit{c7} with an improved version of the game for Black.

\textbf{3...\textit{Qe8} 4 \textit{g4}!}

The key move, which leaves the black knight badly placed for the rest of the game.

\textbf{4...h5} 5 \textit{h3}! \textit{h4xg} 6 \textit{h4xg} 5 \textit{b5} 7 \textit{b4} 8 \textit{Qe4}

Black also suffers after 6...\textit{Qc4} 7 \textit{Qd4}.

\textbf{7 a\textit{xb}5 a\textit{xb}5 8 \textit{Qe}4}

With the devastating threat of \textit{Qf6}+.

\textbf{8...\textit{Qx}c2 9 \textit{Qf}6+ \textit{Qxf}6 10 \textit{exf}6 \textit{Qxb}2 11 \textit{fxg}7}

White soon won.

\textit{Position 264}

\textbf{A.Tolush-M.Botvinnik}

\textit{USSR Championship, Moscow 1945}

\textbf{1...\textit{Qh}4!}

Preparing 2...\textit{Qf4} in order to stop the enemy plan of \textit{Qe3-f3}. Instead, 1...\textit{Qh4}?! 2 \textit{We5} \textit{Wf6} 3 \textit{Qg3} just repeats moves, while the straightforward 1...\textit{b4}?! runs into 2 \textit{Qxe3}!, when 2...\textit{bxc}3? 3 \textit{Qf3} is fatal for Black.

\textbf{2 \textit{Qe3} \textit{Qf4} 3 \textit{Qe}2 \textit{Wh}4 4 \textit{Qf}3 \textit{b4}!}

After the successful restriction Black can get on with his own play.

\textbf{5 \textit{Qxh}4}

5 \textit{Qg4}?! seems more critical; e.g. 5...\textit{Wf6} 6 \textit{cxb}4 \textit{axb}4 7 \textit{Qb}1! \textit{Qc}3 8 \textit{Qxb}4 \textit{Qe}4 9 \textit{Qxe}4! \textit{Qxe}4 10 \textit{Qb}1, intending 11 \textit{Qa}3 with some counterplay.

\textbf{5...\textit{Qxh}4 6 \textit{g}3?!}

A lesser evil was 6 \textit{cxb}4 \textit{axb}4 7 \textit{Qb}1 \textit{Qxd}4 8 \textit{Qxb}4, eliminating the dangerous b4-pawn – Botvinnik.

\textbf{6...\textit{Qh}8 7 \textit{cxb}4 \textit{axb}4}

Thanks to his strong passed pawn and the weakness on d4, Black is clearly better despite being on the exchange down. The game continued 8 \textit{Qb}1 \textit{Qb}8 9 \textit{h4} \textit{Qb}7 10 \textit{Qh}2 \textit{Qxd}6 11 \textit{g}4 \textit{Qc}3 12 \textit{Qa}1?! \textit{Qb}5! 13 \textit{Qd}1 \textit{Qa}7 14 \textit{h}5 \textit{g}5! 15 \textit{Qg}2 \textit{Qa}2 16 \textit{Qe}2 and White resigned in view of 16...\textit{Qxc}2.
Position 265
V.Korchnoi-Gil.Hernandez
FIDE World Championship,
Groningen 1997

1 g3!

Preparing h2-h4 in order to prevent the plan of ...\\h7_h7 and ...\\g5_g5 with a favourable
bishop exchange.
1...\\h7_h7 2 h4!

From now on Black's bishop remains a
“bad” one, and the knight on h7 proves mis-
placed.
2...\\h6_f6 3 \g2_g2 \ec8_c8 4 \a4_a4 \c5_c5 5 \c4_c4

Thanks to his space advantage and su-
perior bishop, White is considerably better.
The game continued 5...\\d7_c7 6 \b4_b4 \c5_c5 7
\a1_a1 \f8_f8 8 \c4_c4 \fc8_c8 9 \a3_a3 h5 10 f3 g6 11 b4
\cd7_d7 12 b5! \xc4_c4 13 \xc4_c4 axb5 14 \xb5_b5
\g7_g7 15 \a7_a7, preparing a5-a6 and \c6_c6 with
strong pressure.

Position 266
Alexa.Ivanov-E.Magerramov
Riga 1980

1 b4!

Before carrying on with the attack, White prevents a defensive exchange with
...\\e7_e7-c5. The straightforward 1 \h7_h7! promises less after 1...\\c5_c5! 2 \e3_e3 \xe5_e5!,
heading for g4, or 2 c3 \fd8_d8 3 \xf7_f7 \xe5_e5! 4
\xe5_e5 \xe5_e5 5 \xb7xb7 \xd4_d4 6 \xd4_d4 \c6_c6 7
\c2_c2 \xd1_d1+ 8 \xd1_d1 \xh7_h7 – Ivanov.
1...\\fd8_d8

Parrying the threat of 2 \h7_h7 in advance.
Obviously 1...gx6? would have run into 2
\h4.h4.
2 \h5_h5!

Eyeing vulnerable points at f7 and g7.
2...\\f8_f8

Not 2...f8? 3 \g3_g3 g6 4 \xg6_xg6! fxg6 5
\xg6.g6.
3 c3 \xb4xb4 4 \g3_g3! \g6_g6

If 4...g6, then 5 cxb4 \xd4_d4 6 \w3_e3 and
wins – Ivanov.
5 \xd6xf6 \xg6_g6 \xf8_f8 7 \xf4f4!

A good alternative was 7 \f7_f7 \e4_e4 8
\f8xf8+! \xf8xe4 9 \xe6_e6, intending \f4f4-g6.
7...\d5_d5 8 \xe6_xe6 \xe6_ex6 9 \xe6_ex6 \e8_e8 10 \g6_g6

Preparing e5-e6 with a crushing advan-
tage.

Position 267
M.Botvinnik-J.Kan
USSR Championship, Leningrad 1939

1 \e3_e3!

Prophylaxis against the threat of
1...\g5.g5.
1...\a6_a6

After 1...\g5_g5? 2 \xg5_hxg5 \b8_b8 or 3
\c1_c1 White is just winning.
2 \b8_a4 \a4_a4 3 \h2_h2!

Further prophylaxis, against any checks
along the g1-a7 diagonal and the first rank.
In contrast, 3 \g3?? failed to 3...\a7_a7+.
3...\a3_a3

After 3...\c2_c2 4 \g3_a5 \a5_a5 5 \a8_a8 \xa8xa8
5...\c2_c2 6 \xa2_a2 \xa2_a2 7 \e7_e7! \f2_f2 8 \xe5_ex5
is equally desperate.
6 \xa8xa8 \xa8xa8 7 \xe5_ex5 \c6_c6 8 \c7_c7 1-0

Position 268
M.Munoz Sanchez-J.Hellsten
Salinas 2005

1...\c8_c8!

Vacating a8 for the bishop before White
goes \b3_b3-a5.
2 \a5_a5 \a8_a8 3 \c4_c4!

PREFERABLE was 3 \e3_e3 g6!? 4 \g4_g4 \xg4_xg4 5
\xg4_exf4 6 \xf4xf4 \e5_e5 with balanced play.
3...\c5_c5!
Now White has a problem with the e4-pawn.
4 cxb5 a6 5 wxd3 wb6+! 6 h1 xb5 7 wxb5+ axb5 8 c3 0-0
Thanks to his bishop pair and the slight weakness on e4, Black is better.

Position 269
F.Gheorghiu-A.Petrosian
Bagneux 1982

1 g3!
Preparing 2 g2, in order to avoid any surprises along the back rank, and put the king on a square of opposite colour to the black bishop.
1...xc1 2 g2 xd1
Or 2...xd4 3 xc1 xc1 (unfortunately for Black, no longer with check) 4 xd4 with pressure on d5.
3 xd1 cc5 4 h4!
Opening a new front on the kingside.
4...wb4?!
The beginning of a flawed plan. More solid seems 4...b5 5 h5 xd4! 6 xxd4 wb6, followed by...we6.
5 h5 cc7 6 wf3 cc5
It transpires that 6...wc5? fails to 7 df5 d7 8 xh6+!, so Black has to lose precious time on returning his rook.
7 wf5 wa3 8 wd7!
With the simple idea of 9 we8+ taking the f7-pawn.
8...f8 9 b5!
Heading for d6 with a decisive attack.

Position 270
G.Kasparov-V.Kramnik
Las Palmas 1996

1...wf8!
Reinforcing the kingside in view of the coming f2-f4.

2 we3
Or 2 xf8+ xf8 3 f4 g7 4 fxe5 dx e5 5 f3 a6 and Black defends.
2...e8!
More prophylaxis. At this moment a draw was agreed, but let’s see what would have happened if White carried on with his plan.
3 f4? exf4 4 xf4 fd7!
Thanks to his clever second move Black manages to regroup his knight to e5 with an excellent game.

Position 271
J.Hellsten-F.Vallejo Pons
Turin Olympiad 2006

1 a3!
Creating a shelter for the king on a2.
1...d2+ 2 a2 f3 3 g3 d4
Or 3...e4 c5!?, preparing cc4.
4 d2 d7 5 g3 wg4?
In time trouble both players missed 6 g3 on the next move. 5...f6 was correct.
6 wg8+ wc7 7 wc5 we6 8 ze3
At this point the game continued 8 f4? f6 9 fxe5 b6 10 wg8 fxe5 11 wa8 xc4+ 12 b3 wa6 13 we8 with rather unclear play. However, the simple 8 ze3!, with the threat of xxd4, would have yielded White a better endgame after 8...b6 9 xe5+ xe5 10 xxe5.

Position 272
A.Lilienthal-V.Ragozin
Moscow 1935

1...za7!
Considering White’s probable plan of e3-e4, Black covers the f7-pawn in advance.
2 d2
If 2 e4, then 2...dxe4 3 fxe4 cxd4 4 cxd4 cc4! 5 xc4 bxc4 6 e5 d5 – Watson. Now
the white central pawns are confidently blocked and the attack on f7 has been neutralized.

2...\(\text{Wb6}\) 3 \(\text{Qf1}\) \(\text{Ae7}\)

Directing both rooks at the potential e3-e4 advance.

4 \(\text{a4}\) \(\text{c4}\) 5 \(\text{hxc2}\) \(\text{c8}\) 6 \(\text{g3}\) \(\text{h5}\)!

Now 7 \(\text{e4}\)? runs into 7...\(\text{h4}\). If White avoids this by 7 \(\text{h4}\), then after a future e3-e4, ...\(\text{d5xe4}\), \(\text{f3xe4}\) a weak square appears on \(\text{g4}\). In conclusion Black has managed to frustrate the opponent’s plans, with a comfortable game.

**Position 273**

**J.Hellsten-L.Jicman**  
Gyula 2002

1 \(\text{Sb1}\)!

By avoiding a check on \(\text{f4}\) in advance White maintains maximum flexibility in his central attack. Both 1 \(\text{d5}\) \(\text{xc3}\) 2 \(\text{Wxc3}\) \(\text{Wf4}\) 3 \(\text{d2}\) \(\text{exd5}\) and 1 \(\text{xf5}\) \(\text{Wf4}\) 2 \(\text{d2}\) \(\text{xf5}\) 3 \(\text{e4}\) 0-0 4 \(\text{d5}\) \(\text{xc3}\) 5 \(\text{Wxc3}\) \(\text{Wf4}\) 6 \(\text{d2}\) \(\text{f6}\) seem less promising for him.

1...\(\text{Sd7}\)!

Now 1...\(\text{Wf4}\)!! is strongly met by 2 \(\text{d2}\) 3 \(\text{d5}\) but 1...\(\text{d6}\) 2 \(\text{d3}\) \(\text{d7}\) was a safer choice, when 3 \(\text{e5}\) intending 3...0-0-0! 4 \(\text{c5}\) keeps the initiative.

2 \(\text{xf5}\) \(\text{exf5}\) 3 \(\text{d5}\) 0-0-0

Or 3...\(\text{cxd5}\)!! 4 \(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{gxf6}\) 5 \(\text{ge1}\) \(\text{f8}\) 6 \(\text{c3}\) etc.

4 \(\text{d6}\) \(\text{wb6}\) 5 \(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{gxf6}\) 6 \(\text{c5}\)

Creating a powerful protected passed pawn.

6...\(\text{Wb4}\)!

6...\(\text{a5}\) was correct, when 7 \(\text{d4}\), preparing \(\text{b2-b4}\), keeps the advantage.

7 \(\text{d4}\) \(\text{wb5}\) 8 \(\text{a4}\)

With the double threat of 9 \(\text{d4}\) and 9 \(\text{xa7}\). White is practically winning.

**Position 274**

**D.Fridman-V.Korchnoi**  
Calvia Olympiad 2004

1...\(\text{Wc8}\)!

Removing the queen from the vulnerable d-file before White puts a rook on \(\text{d1}\), and taking the \(\text{g4}\)-square away from his queen. Instead, 1...\(\text{c5}\)!! 2 \(\text{Ad1}\) leads to unpleasant pressure on the \(\text{d5}\)-pawn, while 1...\(\text{Wd8}\)!! was less precise due to 2 \(\text{Wg4}\) with some initiative – Korchnoi.

2 \(\text{fd1}\) \(\text{we6}\) 3 \(\text{a2}\) \(\text{c5}\)!

Gaining some space and preparing a future pawn storm on the queenside.

4 \(\text{e3}\)

Or 4 \(\text{Ad1}\) \(\text{fd8}\) 5 \(\text{wb3}\) \(\text{c4}\) 6 \(\text{wc2}\) \(\text{b5}\) with considerable counterplay, whereas 4 \(\text{d1}\) permits 4...\(\text{d4}\) 5 \(\text{xb7}\) \(\text{dxc3}\) 6 \(\text{bxc3}\) \(\text{ab8}\) 7 \(\text{d5}\) \(\text{we5}\) 8 \(\text{c4}\) \(\text{b5}\) with just a minimal disadvantage.

4...\(\text{fc6}\) 5 \(\text{Ad1}\) \(\text{fd8}\) 6 \(\text{wxf1}\) \(\text{b5}\) 7 \(\text{a5}\) \(\text{we8}\) 8 \(\text{Ad1}\) \(\text{we5}\)

Simplest. In contrast, the game saw 8...\(\text{d8}\), when White should have tried 9 \(\text{c3}\) \(\text{b4}\) 10 \(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xe7}\) 11 \(\text{xe1}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 12 \(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 13 \(\text{xa8}\) \(\text{xa8}\) 14 \(\text{wb5}\) with the double threat of \(\text{xb4}\) and \(\text{wb7}\) – Korchnoi.

9 \(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 10 \(\text{c3}\) \(\text{we6}\) 11 \(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{a6}\)

White has just a slight edge – Korchnoi.

**Position 275**

**Y.Seirawan-E.Van Haastert**  
Dutch Team Championship 2007

1 \(\text{a2}\)!

A “mysterious” rook move, realizing that Black’s only viable plan is ...\(\text{b6-b5}\).

1...\(\text{b5}\) 2 \(\text{axb5}\) \(\text{axb5}\) 3 \(\text{cc2}\)!

Some more prophylaxis in order to cover the sensitive second rank. Meanwhile, Black is just playing with one rook, since the one on \(\text{f8}\) is tied to the defence of \(\text{f5}\).
3...bxc4 4 bxc4 Nb3

It doesn't seem right to abandon the seventh, but there weren't many moves to choose from.

5 Na7 Nf7 6 Nxb8 gxf4

Or 6...c3 7 Ng8, attacking Black's kingside pawns.

7 exf4 Nxd4 8 Nf1!

With the threat of 9 Ne2+.

8...Bxb2 9 Bxb2 Nh2 10 Na7

White keeps the initiative. There followed 10...N4d4 11 Ne2 N h8 12 Nh3 Ng7
13 Nf1! Nh6 14 Na6 Nh8 15 Nh3 Ne7 16 Nh4, winning a pawn, and later on the game.

Position 276
J.Cubas-J.Hellsten
Mendoza 2005

1...Nh7!

In view of the coming Bc2-g2, Black protects the g7-pawn in advance and prepares a further reinforcement of the kingside by ...Nh8 and ...N h7-f5. In contrast, the game continued 1...fxe5? 2 Ng2 Nh6 3 f5! exf5 4 Nh5, followed by Nd2-e4, with a strong attack.

2 Ng2 Nh6 3 Nh6 Nh7

White can't play 3 Nc5? Nxc5+ 4 Bxc5 due to 4...Nh5+.

3...Nf6 4 Nh5

Or 4 Nf4 Nh7 5 b3 Nh7, heading for e4.

4...Nh7 5 Nh4 Nh6

White's attack has been neutralized, e.g.
6 Nh3 Nh6 7 Nh2 Nhg2+ 8 Nhg2 Nh5, when 9 Nh6+ leads nowhere after 9...Nh7.

Position 277
J.I.Andersen-J.Hellsten
Gistrup 1997

1.Nb8!

Preparing ...Nbd7-f8 to reinforce the kingside defence. 1...Nbd7 is less exact due to 2 Na1, preparing Nb1 and Nd3-h3, a plan that White doesn't manage to realize in the game.

2 Nh3

2 Nh3 Na1 Nh8 3 Nh7 7 Na1 seems more active, when Black could delay 3...Nh8 in view of 4 Nh5, preferring 3...b6 followed by ...Nh7 in order to conclude his development.

2...Nbd7 3 Na1 Nh8 4 Nh5 Nh7 5 Nh3

The tempting 5 Nh5 backfires after
5...exd5 6 cxd5 wxb8 7 wxe7 g4.
5...c6
Preparing ...g6-f4 with an even game.

Position 279
A.Karpov-V.Smyslov
USSR Team Championship 1972

1 wd4!
Prophylaxis against the plan of 1...e7, heading for g6, which can now be met by 2 wb6!, forcing a queen exchange and winning one of the pawns at b7 and d6. In contrast, the straightforward 1 d4?! permits 1...e7 2 wb3 wc5! with counterplay.

1...we7
Now that his plan no longer works, Black is limited to defensive actions. It also becomes evident that the ...g6-g5 advance has just produced weaknesses.
2 d2 e1 3 b3 e2 4 f3! e5
In view of the threat 5 e4, the rook has to retreat.

5 e3 f6
Or 5...exe3+?! 6 fxe3!, followed by 7 e4 with strong pressure.

6 e4 g7 7 g2!
Preparing g3-f5. White is clearly better.

Position 280
K.Kachiani Gersinska-P.Cramling
France 2005

1...h6!
With the simple idea of 2 f4?? g6, trapping the queen. White is left without a natural plan.

2 c5 b6 3 b4 a5!
Destroying the enemy queenside.

4 a4 axb4 5 xb6 a5!
With the double idea of 6...xc5 and 6...d3 followed by ...wd4. Black went on to win.

Position 281
A.Beliavsky-Z.Almasi
Wijk aan Zee 2006

1 f1!
Securing the king in advance from the threat of 1...xd3 followed by ...h2+ and mate. In contrast, 1 g3 wh6 2 g2 c8 leads to a black initiative – Beliavsky.

1...g6 2 g3
Preventing 2...wh2 and also limiting the black knight.

2...xe1+ 3 xe1 c8 4 g2 wd7
Contrary to the previous subline, Black doesn’t have the ...d6-h6 move at his disposal.

5 wh1 e8 6 g1!
A smart attack on the d5-pawn.

6...e5 7 h4 h6 8 f3 wh3?!
A risky decision. 8...b6 was preferable – Beliavsky.

9 xf7 exh4 10 xd5 xd5 11 xd5 xg3
The only way of justifying the sacrifice.

12 fxg3 wxg3+ 13 f1 g4
If 13...f4+?, then White returns a piece by 14 f3!.

14 wa8+ h7 15 we4+ h8 16 c3
The position remains rather unclear, but White triumphed in the end.

Position 282
M.Sadler-Y.Pelletier
German League 2003
(analysa variation)

1...h8!
Securing the king from a check on f7 before getting on with his own attack. The immediate 1...f3+?? failed to 2 xf3 xf3 3 xf7+ with mate, while after 1...f8? 2 d5! f3+ 3 xf3 xf3 4 wg5 White wins.

2 xf7
Or 2 f4 xf3 3 xf3 xf3+ 4 f2 d2!
and wins – Pelletier.
2...\eb3+ 3 \xf3 exf3 4 \xf3 \xf3
Intending ...\ac8-c6-g6 with a strong attack.

Position 283
J.Sherwin-B.Ivkov
World Junior Championship, Copenhagen 1953

1 \xa2!

A prophylactic retreat that lets White react in different ways to Black’s two main options, 1...b5 and 1...\db6. Less promising is 1 \g5 b5 2 \a2 \b7 and Black achieves a standard set-up, or 1 \e5 \xe5 2 dxe5 \xd1 3 \xd1 \d7 with approximate equality.

Now 1...b5? runs into 2 d5! exd5 3 \xd5

2 \e5 \d7?!

After 2...\db5 3 \f3 \d6 4 \g5 White also exerts considerable pressure.

3 \f3! \wc8 4 \g5 \c6 5 \wh3 \d5

Or 5...\db5 6 \xd5?, when both 6...\xd5 7 \xd5 \xg5 8 \db6 and 6...\xd5 7 \xf6 \xf6 8 \xd5 \xd5 exd5 9 \d7! \xd4 10 \ac1!, followed by \xf8, win material for White.

6 \b1 \g6 7 \wh4 \d8 8 \ee3!

Heading for h3 with a strong attack. The game concluded 8...\c8 9 \g4! \d6 10 \h3 \de8 11 \wh6 \g2 12 \xg2 \wdx4 13 \xf6 \xf6 14 \g5 \ec5 15 \ee4! and Black resigned.

Position 284
E.Terpugov-T.V.Petrosian
USSR Championship, Moscow 1951

1...\e8!

Preparing ...\g8 and ...\f8 to safeguard the kingside.

2 \f5 \d8!
The immediate 2...\g8?! permits 3 \h5, hitting the pawn on f7.

3 \g4 \g8 4 \h5 \e8

This defence is possible thanks to the clever 2...\d8.

5 \b3 \f8

Black has now covered all the potentially weak spots on the kingside and is ready to fight for the initiative. The game continued 6 \e2 \g6 7 \h3 f5! 8 \f4 \f6 9 \e1 fxe4 10 \xc8 \xc8 11 \xe4 \xe4 12 \xe4 \g7 13 \d3 \b4! 14 \f3 c4 and Black went on to win.

Position 285
J.Hellsten-P.H.Nielsen
Copenhagen 1996

1 \f1!

Withdrawing the king from the vulnerable g1-a7 diagonal and covering the e1-square. Instead, 1 \xc5?? \e1+ 2 \f2 \e2+ 3 \g3 \g4+ followed by 4...\e2+ leads to mate, while the game continued 1 \d7? \e1+! 2 \xe1 \xf2+ 3 \xf2 \xd7 with a slight black advantage.

1...\d6

If 1...\xf2, then 2 \d7 \e1+ 3 \xf2 \e2+ 4 \f3 and wins. By the text Black parries the threats of both 2 \d7 and 2 \xc5 \xc5 3 \xe6, but runs into a new tactical theme.

2 \xd6! \xd6 3 \xd6 \xd6 4 \b7+ \h6 5 \xa8 \d1+ 6 \e1

White is winning.

Position 286
M.Carlsen-V.Kramnik
London 2009

1...\f8!
Removing the king from the vulnerable a2-g8 diagonal in advance. Instead, the game continued 1...\text{\textturn}f5? 2 e4 \text{\textturn}g4 3 \text{\textturn}g3 \text{\textturn}w7 4 \text{\textturn}f1 and White kept a sound extra pawn.

2 \text{\textturn}d4

2 \text{\textturn}g3 \text{\textturn}w1+ 3 \text{\textturn}x1d1 \text{\textturn}x1d1+ 4 \text{\textturn}f2 \text{\textturn}b1 yields Black considerable counterplay, while the attempt to prepare \text{\textturn}e2-d4 by 2 \text{\textturn}b4? fails to 2...\text{\textturn}b3! - Golubev; e.g. 3 \text{\textturn}x1b3 \text{\textturn}x1b3 4 \text{\textturn}x1b3 \text{\textturn}x1e2 with an extra exchange. Obviously this line would be winning for White with the black king still on g8, as 4 \text{\textturn}x1b3 comes with check.

2...\text{\textturn}x1d1! 3 ex1d1 \text{\textturn}f5 4 \text{\textturn}w1a2

Thanks to the clever 1...\text{\textturn}f8 Black is not in check at this point and can continue with active measures.

4...\text{\textturn}d1+! 5 \text{\textturn}f1 \text{\textturn}x1b1 6 \text{\textturn}x1b1 \text{\textturn}b3 7 \text{\textturn}f3 \text{\textturn}x1c1 8 \text{\textturn}x1b3 \text{\textturn}x1f4

With an active queen Black has no problems.

\textbf{Position 287}

\textbf{Pr.Nikolic-Wl.Schmidt}
Novi Sad Olympiad 1990

1 \text{\textturn}g4!

Provoking ...f7-f5 in order to open the a2-g8 diagonal towards the black king.

1...f5 2 \text{\textturn}d5+ \text{\textturn}h8 3 \text{\textturn}f3

With the threat of 4 \text{\textturn}e5+, winning a piece.

3...h6 4 \text{\textturn}w1e6 \text{\textturn}w8

Or 4...\text{\textturn}h7 5 \text{\textturn}x1b7 \text{\textturn}x1b7 6 \text{\textturn}x1b7 \text{\textturn}b8 7 \text{\textturn}d1 \text{\textturn}e7 8 \text{\textturn}c6 and wins - Nikolic.

5 \text{\textturn}x1d6! \text{\textturn}x1d6

If 5...\text{\textturn}x1d6, then 6 \text{\textturn}e5+! \text{\textturn}h7 7 \text{\textturn}x1b7+ etc.

6 \text{\textturn}w1f6+ \text{\textturn}h7 7 \text{\textturn}d1d6 \text{\textturn}a1d8 8 \text{\textturn}x1b7! \text{\textturn}w8 9 \text{\textturn}w1h8+ \text{\textturn}x1h8 10 \text{\textturn}c7! 1-0

In view of \text{\textturn}e5+ on the next move.

\textbf{Position 288}

\textbf{A.Grant-K.Arkell}
Hastings 1994/95

1...\text{\textturn}w1g4!

Provoking a decisive weakness in the white pawn structure.

2 f3

2 \text{\textturn}c1 runs into 2...\text{\textturn}x1e3+! 3 fxe3 \text{\textturn}w1xg3+ 4 \text{\textturn}d1 \text{\textturn}w1g4+! 5 \text{\textturn}w1e1 \text{\textturn}w1g2 and the threats cannot be parried, while after 2 \text{\textturn}f4 g5 3 \text{\textturn}d3 f4 Black’s attack is also irresistible.

2...\text{\textturn}w1g5 3 \text{\textturn}f1 \text{\textturn}x1e3!

Creating a decisive pin along the e-file.

4 \text{\textturn}x1e3 \text{\textturn}w1xe3 5 \text{\textturn}d1

Or 5 \text{\textturn}w1d2 \text{\textturn}e8 6 \text{\textturn}w1x3 \text{\textturn}x1e3 and wins.

5...\text{\textturn}a1d! 6 \text{\textturn}w1x4 \text{\textturn}b2 0-1

\textbf{Position 289}

\textbf{5.Cicak-I.Yarmonov}
Dresden Olympiad 2008

1 \text{\textturn}w1c2!

Provoking a weakness on Black’s kingside. In contrast, 1 \text{\textturn}w1h5?! g6 2 \text{\textturn}x1g6 fx1g6 3 \text{\textturn}x1g6 hx1g6 4 \text{\textturn}w1xg6+ \text{\textturn}h8 is only a draw, since 5 \text{\textturn}h6? fails to 5...\text{\textturn}w1g8 6 \text{\textturn}w1h5 \text{\textturn}w1e8.

1...\text{\textturn}g6

Or 1...h6 2 0-0-0, when 2...\text{\textturn}x1e8? (preparing ...\text{\textturn}f8) fails to 3 \text{\textturn}h7+ \text{\textturn}h8 4 \text{\textturn}e6!

2 \text{\textturn}h4! \text{\textturn}c4 3 0-0-0 \text{\textturn}x1e3 4 \text{\textturn}x1e3 \text{\textturn}x1h4

Black has ruled out the h4-h5 idea, but is now suffering on the h-file.

5 \text{\textturn}g3 \text{\textturn}x1g6 6 \text{\textturn}x1g6+ \text{\textturn}h8 7 \text{\textturn}w1y1! \text{\textturn}x1e5

Since 7...\text{\textturn}x1h7 8 \text{\textturn}x1g6+ \text{\textturn}h8 9 \text{\textturn}x1h1 is terminal, Black tries a counter sacrifice.

8 \text{\textturn}x1e5 \text{\textturn}f5 9 \text{\textturn}w1h2

With a decisive attack. The game concluded 9...\text{\textturn}w1b6 10 \text{\textturn}x1h8+ \text{\textturn}f1 11 \text{\textturn}w1h7+ \text{\textturn}e8 12 \text{\textturn}x1f8+ \text{\textturn}f1x8 13 \text{\textturn}x1g6+ \text{\textturn}x1g6 14 \text{\textturn}f1+! and Black resigned.
**Position 290**

**D.Reinderman-J.Timman**

Dutch Championship 1996

1...\(\text{Kd7}\)!

Provoking h3-h4 in order to create a weak square on g4.

2 h4

2 \(\text{Kh2}\) runs into 2...h4! intending 3 g4? \(\text{Nxd4}\), while after 2 cxd5 cxd5 3 \(\text{Kf4+}\) \(\text{Bb8}\) 4 h4 \(\text{Cc6}\) Black keeps the advantage.

2...\(\text{Qg4}\) 3 \(\text{We2}\) f6!

Preparing ...g7-g5 with an attack.

4 cxd5 cxd5 5 \(\text{Ac1+}\) \(\text{Bb8}\) 6 \(\text{Cc3}\) g5 7 \(\text{Kf1}\) gxf4

More forcing was 7...\(\text{gxh4}\) 8 \(\text{gxh4}\) \(\text{Qg8}\), intensifying the attack -- Horn. With his next move White manages to sidestep this line, but also leaves Black with a protected passed pawn on e4.

8 \(\text{exf4}\) \(\text{Cc8}\) 9 \(\text{Qf1}\) \(\text{Cc6}\) 10 \(\text{Cc3}\) \(\text{Cc8}\)

Thanks to his superior pawn structure and more active pieces, Black is better.

**Position 291**

**R.Vandarbiev-V.Beznosikov**

Russian Championship, Krasnoyarsk 2003

1 \(\text{g5}\)!

Provoking ...\(\text{e7-e6}\) in order to soften up the dark squares in Black’s camp and restrict his bishop on c8.

1...\(\text{e6}\)

After 1...\(\text{Qe8}\) 2 \(\text{Qe1}\) h6 3 \(\text{Qe4}\) White also has much the better game.

2 \(\text{Qe4}\) c7 3 \(\text{g5}\)!

More provocation.

3...\(\text{Qd7}\)!

After 3...\(\text{f6}\) 4 \(\text{Qf4}\) \(\text{Qd5}\) 5 \(\text{Qd6}\) Black admittedly ends up with a long-term weakness on e6, but at least his “good” bishop is still on the board.

4 \(\text{Qf6+}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 5 \(\text{xf6}\)

With a clear grip on the dark squares, while Black’s remaining bishop is horribly passive. There followed 5...\(\text{Qe8}\) 6 \(\text{Qe5}\) f6 7 \(\text{Qg3}\) \(\text{Qg7}\) 8 \(\text{Qfe1}\) \(\text{Qe8}\) 9 \(\text{Qa2}\) \(\text{Qf7}\) 10 \(\text{Qae2}\) and White gradually increased his advantage.

**Position 292**

**E.Agrest-S.K.Williams**

Isle of Man 2004

1...\(\text{Qh6}\)!

Provoking a weakness in the enemy kingside to facilitate the attack.

2 h3 \(\text{g6}\) 3 \(\text{Qh1}\) \(\text{g3}\) 4 \(\text{Qg1}\) \(\text{h6}\) 5 \(\text{Ad1}\)

The only defence to the threat of 5...\(\text{Qxh3+}\), since 5...\(\text{Kf1}\) failed to 5...\(\text{Qxh3+}\) 6 \(\text{Qxh3}\) \(\text{Qxf3+}\).

5...\(\text{Qf6}\)!

More pieces to the attack. Now both 6 \(\text{Qd2}\) \(\text{Qg4}\) and 6 \(\text{b2}\) \(\text{Qh5}\) are fatal for White.

6 \(\text{Qe1}\) \(\text{Qxh3+}\)!

A decisive blow.

7 \(\text{gxh3}\) \(\text{Qxh3+}\) 8 \(\text{Qg1}\) \(\text{Qg4}\) 9 \(\text{Qf2}\)

The only move, in view of 9 \(\text{fxg4}\) \(\text{Qg2}\) mate.

9...\(\text{Qxf2}\) 10 \(\text{Qxf2}\) \(\text{e5}\)!

Clearing the e-file. There followed 11 \(\text{g1}\) \(\text{Qh4+}\) 12 \(\text{Qf1}\) g6 13 \(\text{fxe5}\) \(\text{Qh3+}\) 14 \(\text{Qf2}\) \(\text{Qh2+}\) 15 \(\text{Qg2}\) \(\text{Qxe5}\) 16 \(\text{Qa2}\) \(\text{Qe8}\) 17 \(\text{Cc2}\) \(\text{Qxf3}\) and White resigned in view of 18 \(\text{Qxf3}\) \(\text{Qe1}\) mate or 18 \(\text{Qxf3}\) \(\text{Qe4}\) etc.

**Position 293**

**A.Schneider-D.Komarov**

Donetsk 1998

1 \(\text{Qe5}\)!

Provoking ...\(\text{f7-f6}\) to soften up the light squares in Black’s camp. 1 \(\text{Qd6}\) \(\text{Cc6}\) is far less ambitious.
1...f6 2 d6 d6

Or 2...c6 3 h3!? with some pressure on e6. Now if ...f6-f5 at any moment, then the e5-square falls into White’s hands.

3 exd6 e5

After 3...d8 4 w4c6 5 h3! f5 6 ad1 axd6 7 wxd6 we8 8 wc7 Black is in serious trouble – Baburin/Tisdall.

4 h4!

Swapping Black’s main defender of the light squares.

4...exg2 5 exg2 c6 6 w3 d4 7 wd5+ df7

Or 7...h8 8 e3 c2 9 d1 b4 10 we4, preparing ad7 with a strong attack.

8 ad1 wb7 9 xb7 xb7 10 e3 g5 11 f3

Even stronger was 11 exd4 gxd4 12 dxe5 fxe5 13 e6 hxg3 14 hxg3 with a huge edge in the rook endgame.

11...xf3 12 xf3

Thanks to his control of the open file and Black’s light square weaknesses, White is clearly better.

Position 294

A.Alekhine-Em.Lasker
New York 1924

1...h5!

Provoking g3-g4 in order to soften up f4 and the whole h2-b8 diagonal.

2 g4

The only way of saving the d4-pawn.

2...f7 3 bxc6 cc8 4 wb2

After 4 ac1 xc6 5 wb1 wd6 6 g2 ec8 Black is better thanks to the weak pawns on f4 and d4.

4...bxc6 5 f5

Parrying the unpleasant threat of 5...e6.

5...wd6 6 g2 c7 7 fe1 h5!

Preparing...h7-g5 in order to swap the defender on f3.

8 h3 h7 9 xe8+ xe8 10 e1 eb8 11 wc1
g5! 12 e5

Or 12 xg5 wh2+ 13 f1 fxg5 with a decisive attack.

12...f6 13 g5 e4

Black is winning.

Position 295

O. Romanishin-J. Przewoznik
Polanica Zdroj 1980

1 wh5!

Initiating an attack and provoking a weakness in the enemy pawn structure.

1...h6?

1...g6 was more solid, when White could try 2 wh6 f8 3 wh3 followed by e4, eyeing the new weakness on f6.

2 f3 d4

If 2...f8 3 g3 g6, then 4 e4!, heading for f6.

3 xd4 xd4

Or 3...xd4 4 e4, preparing g3 with a strong attack.

4 g3 f8 5 g4!

One more provocative measure to soften up the black defence.

5...g5

As a result of Black’s first move, 5...g6? now fails to 6 xg6 fxg6 7 wxg6.

6 f1!

The last piece joins in with decisive effect.

6...c4 7 e4 e8 8 wh5 gxf4 9 xf4 wc5 10 h1 d7 11 xf7

White soon won.

Position 296

F. Ladron de Guevara- C. Matamoros Franco
Campillos 2007

1...f5!

Provoking e3-e4 in order to restrict the bishop on g2 and gain control of the dark
squares. 1...\texttt{a2}?! 2 \texttt{wb3} \texttt{xb2} 3 \texttt{xb2} \texttt{xb2} 4 \texttt{xb2} is less promising.
2 \texttt{e4} \texttt{d7} 3 \texttt{xg7} \texttt{xg7} 4 \texttt{h1}

Or 4 \texttt{wb3} \texttt{f6} 5 \texttt{wb2} \texttt{a4} with a clear initiative.
4...\texttt{w6f} 5 f4 \texttt{ea2}

Black has the more active position. The game continued 6 b5 \texttt{d4} 7 \texttt{a1} \texttt{g4}!? 8 \texttt{wxd2} \texttt{xd2} 9 \texttt{a7} \texttt{c2}!, followed by ...\texttt{e3}, and White was in trouble.

\textit{Position 297}

\textbf{Mil.Pavlovic-O.Stubberud}

Gausdal 2007

1 \texttt{f4!}

Attacking the d6-pawn to force the compromising ...e6-e5 advance.
2...\texttt{e5}

Both 1...\texttt{xc4} 2 \texttt{xd6} \texttt{xd6} 3 \texttt{xd6} and 1...\texttt{xe5} 2 \texttt{xe5} \texttt{xg2} 3 \texttt{xf7}! \texttt{xf7} 4 \texttt{g2} \texttt{xc4} 5 \texttt{ac1} yield White a more comfortable game.

2 \texttt{g5} 0-0 3 \texttt{ac1} \texttt{fe8}

If 3...\texttt{xc4}?, then 4 \texttt{xe5} and \texttt{xb7}.

4 b3

Now White has a pleasant advantage thanks to the weaknesses on d5 and d6.

4...\texttt{h6} 5 \texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} 6 \texttt{h4!}

In order to swap Black’s “good” bishop.

6...\texttt{g2} 7 \texttt{g2} \texttt{ac8} 8 \texttt{e3} \texttt{b7} 9 \texttt{a4}

Black is never able to launch the ...b6-b5 counter-strike.

9...\texttt{f8} 10 \texttt{ed5} \texttt{d7} 11 \texttt{e3} \texttt{c6} 12 \texttt{w3} \texttt{w8} 13 \texttt{e4}

With an overwhelming positional advantage.

\textit{Position 298}

\textbf{A.Denker-M.Botvinnik}

USA-USSR radio match 1945

1...\texttt{w6c6}!

Provoking f2-f3 in order to soften up the dark squares around the white king.
2 f3 d3!

Clearing the g1-a7 diagonal for the bishop.
3 \texttt{w1}

Also after 3 \texttt{e4} \texttt{e7}! 4 g3 \texttt{xg4} 5 fxe4 \texttt{xc6} 6 \texttt{c1} \texttt{e5} or 3 \texttt{h1} \texttt{c7}! (more provocation) 4 f4 \texttt{e6} 5 \texttt{g1} \texttt{c5} 6 \texttt{xd3} \texttt{xf2}! 7 \texttt{c1} \texttt{e5} Black wins – Kasparov.
3...\texttt{c5}+ 4 \texttt{h1}

Now the knight on g3 becomes exposed, but 4 \texttt{e3} lost outright to 4...d2! 5 \texttt{wd2} \texttt{e5}.

4...\texttt{w6d6!} 5 \texttt{f4}

5 \texttt{h6} failed to the simple 5...\texttt{h7}, preparing ...\texttt{d8}, while after 5 \texttt{f4} \texttt{h2+}! 6 \texttt{e2} \texttt{h8}+ 7 \texttt{h5} \texttt{h5}+ 8 \texttt{g3} \texttt{w4}, followed by ...\texttt{xf6}, the white king is doomed.

5...\texttt{hxh2+}! 6 \texttt{h2} \texttt{h8}+ 7 \texttt{h4} \texttt{h4}+ 8 \texttt{h4} \texttt{w6} 0-1

\textit{Position 299}

\textbf{La.Karlsson-E.Berg}

Stockholm (blitz) 2005

1 \texttt{w4!}

By hitting the a7-pawn and hampering ...g7-g6, White provokes the undesirable ...c6-c5.

1...\texttt{c5}

1...a5 2 0-0-0 leaves Black without reasonable moves, while after 1...g6? 2 \texttt{d5!} \texttt{x5} 3 \texttt{xf6} \texttt{g8} 4 \texttt{xd5} White wins a pawn for nothing.

2 \texttt{w2}

Now a weak square has appeared on d5.

2...\texttt{f7} 3 h5 \texttt{e7} 4 \texttt{d5}! \texttt{x6}

Black is also suffering after 4...0-0 5 0-0-0, followed by \texttt{h1}.

5 \texttt{xd5} \texttt{e6} 6 \texttt{h6} \texttt{xd5} 7 \texttt{xg7} \texttt{g8} 8 \texttt{xd5}

With a sound extra pawn, White soon won.
Position 300
G. Lisitsin-M. Botvinnik
Leningrad 1932

1... $g4!$
   By attacking the e2-pawn Black provokes a concession from White.
2 $\text{s}xd4$
   After 2 f3?! $\text{e}6$ a weak square appears on e3, and the fianchettoed bishop becomes severely restricted.
3... $\text{xd}f8$
   The active $\text{s} e4$ was preferable, e.g. 5... $\text{dxe}3$ 6 $\text{fxe}3$ $\text{xe}3$ 7 $\text{exe}3$ $\text{cd8}$ 8 $\text{a}3$ with just a slight disadvantage – Botvinnik.
5... $\text{h}h3$ 6 $\text{f}f3$ $\text{e}7!$
   Black starts working towards the target on e2.
7 $\text{h}2$ $\text{ce}8$ 8 $\text{h}1$ $\text{e}6$ 9 $\text{b}3$ $\text{b}4$ 10 $\text{g}2$
   Black starts working towards the target on e2.
8... $\text{h}7$
   At this point 11... $\text{xe}6$!, followed by ... $\text{we}7$, yields Black a clear advantage – Botvinnik.

Position 301
B. Larsen-G. Sax
Linares 1983

1... $\text{d}5!$
   Provoking e3-e4 in order to soften up the f4-square. 1... $\text{d}5$ is less convincing due to 2 e4! $\text{xc}3$ 3 $\text{we}3$, preparing a timely $\text{b}2$ – Sax.
2 e4 $\text{wc}6$ 3 $\text{a}3$
   3 f4? $\text{g}6$ and the e4-pawn is exposed.
3... $\text{fd}8$ 4 $\text{g}5$ $\text{h}6$! 5 $\text{e}3$
   Or 5 $\text{xf}6$ $\text{xf}6$ 6 $\text{h}1$ $\text{g}6$ 7 $\text{g}1$ $\text{h}7$ with a slight advantage – Sax.
5... $\text{g}6$ 6 c4 $\text{h}5!$

Black starts working on the f4 weakness.
7 c5 $\text{xc}5$ 8 $\text{xc}5$ $\text{ab}8$ 9 $\text{c}4$ $\text{hf}4$ 10 $\text{a}2$
   On 11 $\text{a}1$ Black had prepared 11... $\text{we}5$ 12 $\text{h}1$ $\text{g}5$ 13 $\text{g}1$ $\text{d}1$!
11... $\text{we}7$
   Heading for g5 or h4, with an initiative.

Position 302
O. Romanishin-M. Suba
Moscow 1986

1 $\text{g}1!$
   Before taking on e6 White provokes ...g7-g6 to soften up the opponent’s dark squares. Less clear is 1 $\text{f}4$ $\text{g}6$ or 1 b4 $\text{e}7$, followed by ...$\text{f}7$.
1... $\text{g}6$
   If 1... $\text{g}6$, then 2 $\text{g}5$! preparing h4-h5 is one of several possibilities.
2 $\text{f}4$ $\text{ed}7$ 3 $\text{xe}6$ $\text{xc}5$ 4 $\text{e}3!$
   Enabling a future $\text{d}4$.
4... $\text{b}6$
   Or 4... $\text{bc}2$ 5 $\text{d}1$, when 5... $\text{xb}2$? fails to 6 $\text{xd}7$ followed by 7 $\text{d}4$ – Romanishin.
5 $\text{h}3$ $\text{e}8$ 6 $\text{d}1$ $\text{cc}2$ 7 $\text{h}5!$
   Some surprising dynamics that helps to activate the rook on g1.
7... $\text{xb}2$
   Both 7... $\text{xb}5$ 8 $\text{xd}5$ and 7... $\text{gxh}5$ 8 $\text{g}7$ were equally favourable for White.
8 $\text{hxg}6$ $\text{hxg}6$ 9 $\text{xc}6$ $\text{xa}2$ 10 $\text{f}1$ $\text{h}8$ 11 $\text{g}2$ $\text{f}7$ 12 $\text{xd}5$ $\text{xd}5$ 13 $\text{xd}5$
   Thanks to his strong bishop White is better.

Position 303
A. Dreev-Ye Jiangchuan
Dubai (rapid) 2002

1... $\text{a}6!$
   By the threat of 2... $\text{d}3$ Black provokes c3-c4, which will open up the d4 and b4
squares for his pieces.

2 c4

Or 2 b4 d3! 3 wb3 c4, fixing a weakness on c3 and transforming the bishop into a giant.

2...xb7 3 d3

After 3 f4 c6 4 e5 wd7, followed by ...d4, Black obtains some initiative.

3 c6 4 wd2 d4

Now that the plan with ...c6-d4 isn’t feasible, Black directs his attention to the e4-pawn.

5 c2 xc2 6 xc2 wc6! 7 d2 f5 8 f3 e6 9 wd3 wc7

Preparing ...c6 and ...b7, with a slight but enduring advantage thanks to the bishop pair and the superior pawn structure.

Position 304

J.Mestel-Y.Balashov
European Team Championship, Moscow 1977

1...c8!

By provoking c2-c3 Black leaves the enemy knight without its desired destiny. Less convincing is 1...f6?! 2 e1 c4 3 c3 and White hangs on to his extra pawn.

2 c3 f6 3 e1 c4 4 g5?

Too materialistic. White should have returned the pawn by 4 b3, when 4...xe2 5 xe2 xc3 just yields Black a minimal edge.

4...g4! 5 hxg4 xg5

Now the active bishop pair more than compensates for the pawn, whereas White keeps having a problem with his misplaced knight.

6 f3 wb5 7 b4 g6 8 c1 a8 9 b3 a2!

Even stronger was 10...a6!, heading for a7 – Balashov.

11 a5 xc3

Also strong was 11...d2 or 11...d3.

12 xxc4 xc4 13 wc4 wb3!

Black keeps a clear advantage.

Position 305

A.Gershon-B.Maryasin
Israeli Team Championship 2002

1 c4!

This attack on the knight forces a minor concession from the opponent. Less promising is 1 c2 f6, followed by ...e7.

1...f5

Accepting some minor weaknesses on e6 and e5, seeing that 1...f6 2 c5 xc5 3 xc5 loses the bishop pair.

2 cc1 e7 3 c3 c5

Or 3...f6 4 e2 c8 5 ed4, swapping the defender on c6. Here 5...xd4?! runs into 6 b4+! e8 7 exd4, preparing 8 cc7.

4 c2 c8 5 d4! ed6!

White is also better after 5...xd4 6 exd4 d7 7 d5 f6 8 b3 – Gershon, but now he obtains a strong attack.

6 xc6+ xc6 7 b4! d7 8 e4! f4 9 b5! ad6

10 xbd6 xbd6 11 e5+!

Freeing the e4-square for the knight. The game continued 11...xe5 12 e4! f6 13 g5 e8 14 c3+ d6 15 b4+ d7 16 b6! and Black resigned in view of 16...xb6 17 a4+ d8 18 f7 mate.

Position 306

R.Janssen-E.Bacrot
Wijk aan Zee 1997

1...b6!

By provoking c4-c5 Black fixes a target on c5 and improves his bishop on e6. Less convincing is 1...xc3 2 bxc3 b6 3 c5 c4 4 d4.

2 c5 d7
After 2...c4?! 3 d4 Black doesn’t achieve anything.

3 c2 f8!

A new provocative measure that forces b2-b4, after which ...a7-a5 will make the rook on a8 terrific.

4 b4 a5 5 a3 f5!

Opening a second front in the centre.

6 d3 g7 7 exf5 gxf5 8 c1

Or 8...he1?! axb4 9 axb4 a3! with threats at c3 and b3.

8...e5 9 e2 axb4 10 axb4 b6!

Softening up the remainder of the white pawn chain.

11 he1 b7 12 f4

After 12...b2 bxc5 13 bxc5 d7 the c5-pawn is doomed.

12 g4 13 xg4 fxg4 14 b2 bxc5 15 e4?!

Or 15 bxc5 a5! - Ribli.

15 f5 16 xg7 xe4+ 17 c3 cxb4+ 18 xb4 d5 19 xe8 xe8

Despite the opposite-coloured bishops, Black went on to win.

Position 308

A.Alekhine-M.Euwe
World Championship (game 7), Holland 1935

1 h4!

Heading for the protected square at f6. Less convincing is 1 0-0-0?! xg3! 2 hgx3 xe5 with compensation – Alekhine.

1...h6 2 0-0-0 eae8 3 f6+ h7 4 f4!

By using some minor tactics White secures the e5-pawn.

4...xf3 5 xf3!

After 5...d3+?! g6 Black can put up more resistance – Euwe.

5...a5 6 xb7 xb7 7 d7!

Winning a pawn, and soon the game as well.

Position 309

R.Osterman-A.Karpov
Portoroz/Ljubljana 1975

1...g5!

Giving up the exchange in order to seize the weak dark squares on the enemy kingside. 1...e8 2 f4 is less convincing.

2 xf8 xf8 3 g1 f4 4 e4 xe5

The most powerful recapture, which vacates the f4-square for the knight.

5 g3 f4 6 d2 c7 7 f1 d6

Thanks to his grip on the dark squares, Black is much better. The game continued 8 e1 f5 9 e2 f7 10 b1 a5 11 a3 h5!, followed by...h5-h4, and Black went on to win.

Position 310

J.Hellsten-R.Chavez
Santa Cruz 2003

1 b5!

Clearing the way for the rook towards the weak square at c6.
Mastering Chess Strategy

1...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qx}}b5?!}

1...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qc}}8 is met simply by 2 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qxc8 \textit{Qxc8 3 \textit{Qc1. Instead, 1...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qf}}e4! was preferable, when 2 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qc6 \textit{Qf5 3 \textit{Qac1 \textit{Qg5! yields Black some kingside counterplay. So the simple 2 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qxd6 Qxd6 3 \textit{Qc6 is probably a better choice.}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}

2 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qx}}b5 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qe}}4}

Obviously 2...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qc8 fails to 3 \textit{Qxc8 \textit{Qxc8 4 \textit{Qxb6.}}}}}}}

3 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qc6! \textit{Qb8 4 \textit{Qac1 \textit{Qh6 5 \textit{Qc7!}}}}}}}

Seizing the seventh rank.

5...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qd6 6 \textit{Qd7}}}}

Even stronger was 6 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qc6! with the threat of 7 \textit{Qd7. Black, on his part, should try 6...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qc8 on the next move.}}}}}}}

6...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qxd7?! 7 Qxd7 \textit{Qf5 8 Qc7 \textit{Qg5 9 g4 \textit{Qg7 10 Qd3}}}}}}

Now that 10...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qbc8 fails to 11 \textit{Qxf7, White is practically winning.}}}}

Position 312

P.H.Nielsen-J.Hellsten
Copenhagen 1996

1...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qc7!}}}

Placing the rook on its most active square, without worrying about the loss of the exchange. 1...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qa8?! is less appealing.}}}}

2 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qg3 \textit{Qf8! 3 f4!?}}}}

Preparing f4-f5. After 3 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qxc7?! \textit{Qxc7, preparing ...\textit{Qg6-f4(h4, as well as ...\textit{Qd5-h5, White’s multiple weaknesses yield Black excellent compensation.}}}}}}}

3...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qd5 4 \textit{Qd3 \textit{Qd8!}}}}}

Prophylaxis against the f4-f5 advance.

5 f5

Here the game saw 5 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qe5? \textit{Qxd4 with a sound extra pawn for Black, while the preparatory 5 \textit{Qcd1 can be met by 5...\textit{Qcd7.}}}}}}}

5...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qxf5!}}}

Again Black is ready to give up the exchange.

6 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qxc7 \textit{Qxc7 7 h3 \textit{Qf4 8 Qe3 \textit{Qd6}}}}}}

With ideas like 9...\text{\texttt{\textit{Qe4 and ...\textit{Qg6-h4, Black has sufficient compensation for the exchange.}}}}}

Position 313

E.Bareev-J.Speelman
Hastings 1991/92

1 c5

In order to seize the d6-square with the knight, even at the cost of the exchange. Less convincing is 1 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qc2?!}} f5 2 \text{\texttt{\textit{Qc3 \textit{b7 with a slight black advantage – Bareev.}}}}}

1...\text{\texttt{\textit{f5 2 Qd6 bxc5 3 bxc5 \textit{Qxa1 4 \textit{Qxa1}}}}}

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Now White’s control of the long diagonal adds to his compensation.

4...\(\text{b3?!}\)

Both 4...\(\text{xa6 5 } \text{xa6 } \text{xa6 6 } \text{wa2 } \text{ac7 7 } \text{e1}\) and 4...\(\text{wf6 5 } \text{c4! } \text{xa1 6 } \text{xa1 } \text{a6 7 } \text{a2}\) yield White interesting compensation, but the text simply helps him to increase the pressure.

5 \(\text{xd1 } \text{a6 6 } \text{xa6 } \text{xe3}\)

If 6...\(\text{xa6}, \text{then 7 } \text{xf5! } \text{xf5 8 } \text{xexd8 } \text{exd8 9 } \text{we5 – Bareev.}\)

7 \(\text{xf5 } \text{xf5 8 } \text{xexd8 } \text{exd8 9 } \text{c4}\)

Thanks to his strong passed pawn and the exposed black king, White is practically winning.

Position 314

J.Klovans-I.Nataf

Pardubice 2002

1...\(\text{e4!}\)

By tactical means Black nullifies the weak squares on d5 and e4.

2 \(\text{exe4?}\)

This loses material. 2 ...\(\text{xe4?}\) also failed to 2...d5. Instead, 2 \(\text{d1}\) was correct, when 2...\(\text{e7 3 } \text{e6 } \text{f4 4 } \text{g3 } \text{f6! 5 } \text{h6 } \text{h6 6 } \text{wa1 } \text{c6}\) yields Black a slight advantage – Nataf. The desired ...d6-d5 is just one move away.

2...\(\text{e7! 3 } \text{b7}\)

Neither 3 \(\text{d1}\) \(\text{xd5 4 } \text{xd5 } \text{e8},\) nor 3 \(\text{e6 d5 4 } \text{wd4}\) (or 4 \(\text{we5 } \text{xf4!}\)) 4...\(\text{c6}\) works for White.

3...\(\text{d5 4 } \text{wd4 } \text{c7!}\)

Not 4...\(\text{b5? 5 } \text{a6! and the bishop escapes.}\) Now, on the other hand, it is trapped.

5 \(\text{e5 } \text{f5 6 } \text{g4 } \text{h6 7 } \text{d3 } \text{xexc3 8 } \text{a6 } \text{wb6! 9 } \text{e1 } \text{g6!}\)

Avoiding any tricks with 10 \(\text{xf5}.\) Incapable of saving his bishop, White resigned.

Position 315

L.Ftacnik-M.Narciso Dublan

Lisbon 2001

1 \(\text{e2!}\)

Preparing to triple the major pieces on the d-file towards the weakness on d5. 1 \(\text{xc2, preparing } \text{d2}, \text{is less exact since the other rook remains passive.}\)

1...\(\text{e7}\)

Or 1...\(\text{c8 2 } \text{d2 } \text{e7 3 } \text{xexc8 } \text{wc8 4 } \text{c2}\)

\(\text{wa8 5 } \text{d6 with a clear advantage – Ftacnik.}\)

2 \(\text{d2 } \text{d7 3 } \text{c3! } \text{c8}\)

The tactical blow 3...\(\text{xb4?}\) backfires after 4 \(\text{e5! d4 5 } \text{b3 } \text{c6 6 } \text{xexd7 } \text{xexd7 7}\)

\(\text{exd4 } \text{wd5 8 } \text{f3 – Ftacnik.}\)

4 \(\text{c3 d4}\)

Holding on to the pawn by 4...\(\text{e7 made little sense due to 5 e4, when 5...\(\text{c4 6 } \text{e5}\) wins the exchange.}\)

5 \(\text{xexd4 } \text{xexd4 6 } \text{xexd4 } \text{xexd4 7 } \text{xexd4}\)

Thanks to his extra pawn White is clearly better.

Position 316

V.Kovacevic-Z.Ribli

Bugojno 1984

1...\(\text{f7!}\)

Preparing ...\(\text{a7 with an attack on the}\) a3-pawn before White manages to defend it.

2 \(\text{d2}\)

The depressing 2 \(\text{d2 } \text{a7 3 } \text{b1}\) is well met by 3...\(\text{e5!}, \text{opening the position for the}\) bishops; e.g. 4 \(\text{fxe5 } \text{f6! 5 } \text{dxe5 } \text{xe5\) with a huge advantage.}\)

2...\(\text{f7 3 } \text{c2 } \text{xexa3 4 } \text{xexa3 } \text{xexa3 5 } \text{b2}\)

\(\text{e7 6 } \text{a1 } \text{xexa1 7 } \text{xa1 } \text{d7}\)

Preparing ...\(\text{e8-g6.}\) Black later converted his extra pawn.
Position 317
S.Tarrasch-M.Chigorin
Match (game 19),
St. Petersburg 1893

1 f4?
Converting the e4-pawn into a target. Preferable was 1 0-0 g7 2 f3 0-0 3 e3 with just a slight disadvantage.

1...d7 2 b4
Preventing ...d7-c5 and enabling 3ªb3-a5.

2...g7 3 ªb3 0-0 4 0-0
After 4 0a5? 3xe4! 5 3xe4 3e8 Black recovers the piece with interest.

4...3e8 5 3e1 3f6l 6 3d2
By now the e4-pawn has turned into a headache for White; e.g. 6 3d3 3e7 7 3d2 d5! with double threats at e4 and b4, or 6 e5 dxe5 7 3xd8 3xd8 8 fxe5 3g4 and the pawn is doomed anyway.

6...3d7 7 h3 3e7! 8 3e2 3ae8 9 3f1 h5!
By means of the threat 10...h4, Black finally cracks the enemy defence.

10 h4 3g4! 11 3f2 3xh4 12 3f3 3g4 13 e5 3d5 14 3h2 3d7 15 exd6 3xd6
Black is winning.

Position 318
V.Kovacevic-S.Gligoric
Yugoslav Team Championship 1979

1 3f3?
Intending ...3e7-f5 with an attack on the weakness on e3.

2 3d2 3e7 3 3xf8
Preparing 3d2-f1. After 3 3b3? 3f5 the queen can’t protect the e3-pawn due to the discovered attacks.

3 3xf8 4 3e1 3f5 5 3f1 3d8! 6 3d1 3g5 7 3f4
Vacating the d1-square for the knight. 7 3b3 seemed more natural, but after 7...h5!
8 3xe4?! dxe4 9 3xe6 3xe3!, both 10 3xe3? 3xf1+ and 10 3xe3 3xd4 11 3a3 3f3! let Black recover the material with interest.

7...h5!
With the double intention of 7...h6 and 8...h4-h3.

8 3h1 3h6 9 3d1 h4 10 3b3?!
10 h3 was better, when 10...3c8 keeps the advantage.

10...h3! 11 g3
Or 11 gxh3 3h4 with decisive threats – Gligoric.

11...3g4 12 3c1?
A blunder, but after 12 3d2 3xd4! 13 exd4 3xd2 Black wins anyway.

12...3f3+
In view of the mate, White resigned.

Position 319
P.Leko-A.Morozevich
Frankfurt (rapid) 1999

1 3e2?
Preparing 3d3, followed by the doubling of the major pieces on the f-file in order to attack the weaknesses on f7 and h4.

1...3c8 2 3d2 3c7 3 3d3 3h5 4 3f4!
By placing the rook at the front White achieves an attack on both pawns at the same time.

4...3g5
Or 4...h3 5 3f2, followed by 3h4, and the h3-pawn is doomed.

5 3f2! 3e7 6 3xh4 3f8 7 3e1
Preparing h2-h4 with a decisive advantage.

Position 320
F.Obers-P.Cramling
Gibraltar 2009

1...3c7!
Discovering on the d3-pawn and preparing a future ...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} e6\)-g5 with attacking prospects.

2 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} x b6\)?

A bad reply, since the knight was useful in attacking the e5-pawn. After 2 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} f1\) f6 3 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} b2\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} e6\) 4 h4 or even 4 f4? White could have put up more resistance.

2...axb6 3 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} f1\)

Or 3 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} e4\) f5, conquering the d3-pawn.

3...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} e6!\) 4 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} b2?\)

After 4 h4 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} c5\) the d3-pawn is lost, but even so this was a lesser evil than the game.

4...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} g5\)

Now Black’s invasion on the dark squares is irresistible.

5 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} ec1\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} f3!\) 6 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} h1\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} e6!\)

In view of 7...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} h6\) next, White resigned.

Position 322

M. Illescas Cordoba-J. Hodgson
Spanish Team Championship 1993

1 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} e1!\)

Preparing \(\texttt{\textcopyright} g3\) with an attack on the weak d6-pawn. Obviously Black can’t stop this by 1...g3? due to 2 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} h5.\)

1...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} e7\) 2 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} g3\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} e6\)

Parrying the threat of 3 c5, but now White finds a new angle for the attack on d6.

3 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} a3!\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} d7\)

Or 3...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} a8\) 4 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xd6\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xc4\) 5 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xc4\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xd6\) 6 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} b3\) and White wins – Illescas.

4 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xa7\)

With a sound extra pawn and the black king stranded in the centre, the rest is easy.

4...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} g5\) 5 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} b1\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} gc8\)

If 5...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} xe3\)?, then 6 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} a3.\)

6 c5 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} e7\) 7 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xd6\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xd6\) 8 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xd6\) \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xd6\) 9 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} c5+\)

7 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} d7\) 10 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} f4\)

Preparing \(\texttt{\textcopyright} hf1\) and \(\texttt{\textcopyright} c4\) with a decisive attack.

Position 323

J. Hellsten-J. Hjartarson
Malmö 1995

1 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xc5!\)

A strong exchange sacrifice that ruins the black pawn structure. In contrast, 1 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} c4\) or 1 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} ea1\) is met by 1...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} fd7\), followed by ...f7-f6 and ...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} g6-e8\) with a solid game for Black.

1...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} x c5\)

After 1...\(\texttt{\textcopyright} xc5?\) 2 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xc5\) dxc5 3 \(\texttt{\textcopyright} xe5\)
White regains the material with interest.
2 h4!

Just in time, before Black plays ...f7-f6. 2...c4 d4? d6?! c6 is less convincing; e.g. 4 c4 xxe5? xd6 or 4 a5 xd6 5 xb7 xb7.
2...gxh4 3 xh4 e8 4 xh6 a6 5 e3 g6

The immediate 5...f6 permits 6 c4 b1 7 g5! xe1+ 8 xe1 g7 9 g3 and the e5-pawn is doomed.
6 c4 f6 7 f2 c8 8 a1 g7

Or 8...d6 9 xxd6 xd6 10 a7 etc.
9 a5! d7 10 c5 e8

At this point 11 d2! was correct, preventing b1+ and preparing 12 a5 with an attack on the a7-pawn. The latter also enables a future c4-c5 with a huge advantage.

Position 324
M.Adams-A.Karpov
Las Palmas 1994

1...b8!

Preparing ...c6 and ...d7 in order to improve the bishop and step up the pressure on the e5-pawn. In contrast, 1...d4? runs into 2 d6+! cxd6 3 xb4 with a clear white advantage – Karpov.

2 f6

Or 2 d4 c6 3 f6 xc5!, preventing 4 h5, with a more comfortable game.

2...c6 3 e2 d7! 4 h5

After 4 xd7 xd7 Black has a long-term edge thanks to the weak e5-pawn, so White opts to transform the position. The sharp 4 d4?! xg2 5 h1, on the other hand, fails to 5...xe5! 6 h5 g6 – Karpov.

4...xf3 5 xf3 xe5 6 e4 c6 7 xd7 xb2+!

Before being eliminated, the bishop snatches a pawn.

8 xb2 xd7

Thanks to a slight material advantage and safer king, Black is better.

Position 325
D.Godes-B.Kantsler
Israeli Championship, Jerusalem 1996

1...d7!

Intending 2...f6 with pressure on the weak d5-pawn.

2 b4 f6 3 b3 b7 4 ac1

Preparing an attack on the backward pawn on c7.

4...d7!

Heading for f5 with increased pressure on d5.

5 ec2 ec2!

An annoying move for White since the rook isn’t easily dislodged from e2, but the simple 5...e7! was also strong; e.g. 6 fc1 f5, when 7 xc7? fails to 7...e2! 8 f3 xd5 with a clear advantage.

6 b5

Securing the a-pawn. 6 c4? at once failed to 6...xa4, while after 6 f3 Wh3! White can’t stop 7 g4, since 7 xe2? loses to 7...xd5.

6...axb5 7 axb5 f5 8 c4 e7!

Black confidently defends the c7-pawn, whereas the one on d5 is practically doomed.

9 a1 b8 10 f1 xd5 11 xd5 xd5

Thanks to his extra pawn and more active pieces, Black is winning.

Position 326
P.Keres-A.Tarnowski
Helsinki Olympiad 1952

1 c4!
White keeps the d5-square under control, without worrying about the doubled c-pawns. In contrast, after 1...\textit{\texttt{x}}e6?! fxe6 the doubled e-pawns take the f5 and d5 squares from his knight, while 1...\textit{\texttt{d}}5?! \textit{\texttt{x}}d5 2 exd5 \textit{\texttt{b}}xc3 3 \textit{\texttt{b}}xc3 c4! is rather unclear.

1...\textit{\texttt{b}}xc3 2 \textit{\texttt{b}}xc3 \textit{\texttt{c}}xc4?!

2...\textit{\texttt{w}}b7 seems more active, intending ...\textit{\texttt{a}}a8 and ...\textit{\texttt{d}}6-\textit{\texttt{d}}5.

3 \textit{\texttt{d}}xc4

From now on the ...\textit{\texttt{d}}6-\textit{\texttt{d}}5 break can be discarded, and Black is also suffering from a backward pawn on d6.

3...\textit{\texttt{e}}e6 4 \textit{\texttt{h}}4!

Having a firm grip on the centre, White starts an attack.

4...\textit{\texttt{a}}b8 5 g4 \textit{\texttt{b}}b3 6 \textit{\texttt{d}}d2 \textit{\texttt{b}}b7 7 \textit{\texttt{w}}d3!

Preparing a consolidating f2-f3, as well as \textit{\texttt{a}}a1 with a fight for the b-file.

7...\textit{\texttt{g}}g6?

Too optimistic. 7...\textit{\texttt{e}}e8 was correct, enabling ...\textit{\texttt{b}}b8.

8 f3 h5 9 g5 f6 10 \textit{\texttt{f}}f1 fxg5 11 hxg5 \textit{\texttt{e}}e6

Thanks to his clever 10th move, White can now meet 11...\textit{\texttt{x}}xg5? with 12 \textit{\texttt{h}}h4.

12 \textit{\texttt{d}}db1! \textit{\texttt{x}}xb1+ 13 \textit{\texttt{x}}xb1 \textit{\texttt{w}}f7 14 \textit{\texttt{w}}d5

Preparing \textit{\texttt{b}}7 with a decisive advantage.

\textbf{Position 328}

G.Milos-U.Andersson
Szirak Interzonal 1987

1...\textit{\texttt{w}}c8!

Heading for a6 with an attack at the weakness on c4.

2 g4?! More solid was 2 \textit{\texttt{f}}f2, preparing \textit{\texttt{d}}d1-e3.

2...\textit{\texttt{w}}a6 3 \textit{\texttt{f}}f4

Or 3 g5 hxg5 4 \textit{\texttt{x}}xg5 \textit{\texttt{h}}h7 with a clear edge – Milos.

3...\textit{\texttt{d}}5 4 \textit{\texttt{f}}f2 \textit{\texttt{d}}xe4

Black leaves the c4-pawn for a later occasion and keeps undermining the white centre.

5 \textit{\texttt{f}}xe4 \textit{\texttt{e}}5! 6 \textit{\texttt{g}}g3

Or 6 \textit{\texttt{d}}xe5 \textit{\texttt{c}}c5, preparing ...\textit{\texttt{d}}fd7 – Milos.

6...\textit{\texttt{f}}fe8 7 \textit{\texttt{f}}fe1 \textit{\texttt{e}}6!

In Nimzowitsch style, provoking d4-d5 in order to install a knight on c5.

8 \textit{\texttt{a}}a1 \textit{\texttt{a}}a8 9 \textit{\texttt{e}}e2 \textit{\texttt{b}}b7 10 \textit{\texttt{b}}be1 \textit{\texttt{c}}c6!

After tying the white pieces to the defence of the e4-pawn, Black shifts his focus to the one on c4.

11 \textit{\texttt{c}}5?!

After 11 d5 \textit{\texttt{d}}d6, followed by ...\textit{\texttt{d}}d5 and \textit{\texttt{w}}a6, Black is better – Milos, but now he wins a pawn for nothing.

11...\textit{\texttt{b}}xc5 12 d5 \textit{\texttt{b}}b6 13 h4?! \textit{\texttt{w}}c8! 14 \textit{\texttt{f}}f3 \textit{\texttt{c}}4!

15 \textit{\texttt{h}}h1 \textit{\texttt{c}}5!

Heading for d3 with a clear advantage.

\textbf{Position 328}

J.Hellsten-COMP Chess Genius 4
Malmö 1996

1 \textit{\texttt{c}}c4!

Forcing an exchange on b3, after which the a-file will prove useful in a queenside attack. In contrast, 1 \textit{\texttt{w}}xb6?! axb6 helps Black in a similar way, with ...b6-b5 next.

1...\textit{\texttt{w}}xb3 2 axb3 \textit{\texttt{c}}c7 3 \textit{\texttt{f}}f4! \textit{\texttt{x}}xf4 4 \textit{\texttt{g}}xf4

The threat 4 \textit{\texttt{d}}d6 forced Black into another unfavourable doubling of the opponent’s pawns. Now the f4-pawn increases White’s central control.

4...a6 5 \textit{\texttt{f}}fe5 \textit{\texttt{x}}xe5?!

This third doubling of pawns yields White a significant space advantage and prospects of a later d4-d5 break. A lesser evil was 5...\textit{\texttt{a}}ab8, followed by \textit{\texttt{f}}fd8 and \textit{\texttt{f}}f8-e7.

6 \textit{\texttt{f}}xe5 \textit{\texttt{e}}e8

463
Covering the d6-square from the enemy knight.

7 f4

Here and later 7 e4, preparing d4-d5, suggests itself, but facing the machine I aimed at slower play.

7...d8 8 e3 h6 9 f2 g6 10 f3 h7?!

The beginning of a strange plan, but Black was short of active options.

11 d2 h8 12 f2 g8 13 c1 f8 14 a5 b8 15 e4!

Preparing d4-d5 with a clear advantage.

Position 329

J. Hellsten-S. Schneider
Malmö 1989

1...e6?

This leads to a terrible pawn structure. Preferable was 1...f6! 2 exc6+ f7 with a rather unclear game.

2 exf6 exf6 3 c1!

Obviously the b2-pawn is more important than the one on e5. Now Black has a whole collection of weaknesses and his extra pawn is insignificant.

3 g6 4 0-0

More logical was 4 e2 keeping the king in the centre.

4...g7 5 ffe1 c8

The immediate 5...f7 permits 6 d7, so Black covers the c7-pawn in advance.

6 e3 a6 7 c5 f7 8 d7 f6 9 ed1 he8 10 f1!

Rectifying the error on the fourth move, with focus on the e5-pawn. There followed 10...g5 11 f3 h5 12 e2 f6 13 e3 b8 14 a3! b8 15 e4 g5 16 b3! (preparing a decisive bishop transfer to a5)

16...g6 17 c4 g7 18 b4 a5 19 c3 c5?! 20 a4 g6 21 axa5 a8 22 xc7 a7 23 b6 and Black resigned.

Position 330

S. Savchenko-S. Zagorodniy
Illyichevsk 2006

1...b2!

With focus on the enemy kingside. Now any capture on f3 will clear the g-file for the attack. Less promising was 1 exg5?! wxg5 or 1 d2 h3?! - Golubev.

1...xf3?+

This just accelerates White’s plan. Black is also suffering after 1...xf3 2 gxf3 e2, e.g. 3...g5? 4 h4 or 3...h4 4 c3!. Therefore 1...xb4 2 axb4 d7! is a better try, speeding up his development; e.g. 3...h4 xf3+ 4 gxf3 c8 5 g1 e5 with unclear play.

2 gxf3 xb4

Or 2...d7 3 g1 e5 4 f4! with strong pressure along the a1-h8 diagonal.

3 g1 f6

Returning the pawn, since 3...g6 runs into 4 xe6! fxe6 5 xg6+ f7 6 g7+ e8 7 xb7 and wins - Golubev.

4 xe6+ h8 5 g3! e7 6 g6!

This nice blow seals Black’s fate.

6...c8

Obviously both the queen and bishop were immune.

7 h3

In view of 7...h6 8 xh6+ gxh6 9 xh6+ wh7 10 xf8+, Black resigned.

Position 331

L. Portisch-R. J. Fischer
Sousse Interzonal 1967

1...h5!

Preparing...g7-e6-d4 in order to seize the centre.

2 e3

Less constructive is 2 b6?! e7, followed by...a6, when 3 xc6? fails to 3...d7.
2...\(\textsf{wa7} \ 3 \textsf{h4!}\)

Intending \(\textsf{h}2\) and \(\textsf{h}3\) to swap the opponent's "good" bishop.

3...\(\textsf{g7} \ 4 \textsf{h2} \textsf{f6} \ 5 \textsf{h3} \textsf{xh3} \ 6 \textsf{xh3} \textsf{e6}\)

The alternative was 6...h5, ruling out h4-h5; e.g. 7 \(\textsf{bd1} \textsf{ad8} \ 8 \textsf{xd8} \textsf{xd8} \ 9 \textsf{d2} \textsf{e6}\), followed by ...\(\textsf{d}d4\), with some initiative for Black.

7 \(\textsf{h5} \textsf{gxh5!}\)

Accepting the sacrifice in order to gain time.

8 \(\textsf{h1} \textsf{ad8} \ 9 \textsf{g2} \textsf{g7} \ 10 \textsf{f1} \textsf{g4!} \ 11 \textsf{h4}\)

11 \(\textsf{h4}\) fails to 11...\(\textsf{d}d1+\) 12 \(\textsf{g2} \textsf{f4+}\).

11...\(\textsf{g6}\)

With ideas like ...\(\textsf{h6}\)-g5 and ...\(\textsf{d}d4\), Black is better.

**Position 332**

**Y.Piskov-H.Hermesmann**

Dortmund 1992

1 \(\textsf{g3!}\)

Forcing a favourable exchange on \(\textsf{g3}\), which will clear the f-file for the rook and hamper Black's potential attack.

1...\(\textsf{xg3}\) 2 \(\textsf{fxg3}\) e4 3 \(\textsf{e}e2 \textsf{e}e5\) 4 \(\textsf{b}b5!\)

Preventing 4...\(\textsf{d}d7\) and enabling ideas like \(\textsf{c}c1\)-c7 and \(\textsf{d}d4\)-e6.

4...\(\textsf{we7}\) 5 \(\textsf{c}c1 \textsf{d}d7\) 6 \(\textsf{d}d4\)

6 \(\textsf{c}c7\) seems even stronger, e.g. 6...\(\textsf{d}d3\) 7 \(\textsf{w}d2!\) with the threat of 8 \(\textsf{g}g5\).

6...\(\textsf{ac8}\)

After 6...\(\textsf{g}g4\) 7 \(\textsf{xg4} \textsf{fxg4}\) 8 \(\textsf{xf8+} \textsf{xf8}\) 9 \(\textsf{c}c7!\) White is much better, but in the game too he soon accomplishes the invasion at c7.

7 \(\textsf{xc8} \textsf{xc8} 8 \textsf{wd2} \textsf{a}4\) 9 \(\textsf{c}c1 \textsf{g}g6\)

Intending ...\(\textsf{e}e5\) and ...\(\textsf{f}f5\)-\(\textsf{f}4\) - Piskov.

10 \(\textsf{b}b5! \textsf{e}e5\)

At this point the game continued 11 \(\textsf{c}c7 \textsf{d}d7\) 12 \(\textsf{g}g5\) (or 12 \(\textsf{xb7 f4!}\) 13 \(\textsf{gxf4} \textsf{xf4}\) with counterplay) 12...\(\textsf{we8}\) 13 \(\textsf{c}c3\) \(\textsf{b}5\) and Black put up some resistance. However, the intermediate 11 \(\textsf{h}6!\) was very strong; e.g. 11...\(\textsf{d}d8\) 12 \(\textsf{c}c7 \textsf{d}d7\) 13 \(\textsf{xb7}\) with a sound extra pawn, whereas Black hasn't achieved ...\(\textsf{f}5\)-\(\textsf{f}4\).

**Position 333**

**V.Ivanchuk-M.Krasenkow**

Wijk aan Zee 2003

1...\(\textsf{d}d6!\)

Inviting an exchange on \(\textsf{d}6\), after which the doubled d-pawns would prove useful in taking the \(\textsf{c}5\) and \(\textsf{e}5\) squares away from the enemy pieces. Other moves, such as 1...\(\textsf{f}f4?!\), permit 2 \(\textsf{xf8} \textsf{xf8}\) 3 \(\textsf{c}c5\) with some advantage for White thanks to his excellent knight.

2 \(\textsf{xd6 cxd6}\) 3 \(\textsf{c}c1\)

Now that \(\textsf{c}5\) is no longer available, the destiny of this knight has become less evident.

3...\(\textsf{b}4\)

Limiting the rook on \(\textsf{e}3\).

4 \(\textsf{f}3\)

Or 4 \(\textsf{c}c2 \textsf{f}4?!\) 5 \(\textsf{d}d3 \textsf{e}e8\) with counterplay. But now 5 \(\textsf{c}c2\) is in the air, which explains Black's next move.

4...\(\textsf{c}c7!\) 5 \(\textsf{e}e1\) \(\textsf{a}5\)

Securing the queenside pawns with a roughly equal game. There followed 6 \(\textsf{e}e2 \textsf{f}f7\) 7 \(\textsf{c}c1 \textsf{wb7}\) 8 \(\textsf{w}f2 \textsf{e}e8\) 9 \(\textsf{g}g1\) and a draw was agreed.

**Position 334**

**J.Hellsten-R.Hallerod**

Ikaros 2003

1 \(\textsf{d}5!\)

Preparing \(\textsf{c}4\)-\(\textsf{c}5\) and \(\textsf{c}3\)-\(\textsf{c}4\) in order to clear the long diagonal, even at the cost of a pawn. 1 \(\textsf{c}5?!\) \(\textsf{d}5\) 2 \(\textsf{c}4\) promises less due to 2...\(\textsf{e}6!\), restricting White's dark-squared
bishop, or 1. b2?! e7 2 d5 b6! 3 d4 d7 with a similar effect, while 1 a3 e7 2 c5 d5 3 c6?! b6! 4 c4 e6 leads to rather unclear play.

1...e7 2 c5! dxc5

After 2...xc3 3 cxd6 cxd6 4 a2 w6 5 d4, followed by w3 and c3, White enjoys excellent compensation.

3 c4 b6 4 w2 f7 5 b2 w6 6 f2!

Preparing g2-g4 in order to step up the pressure on the enemy kingside.

6...d6 7 h2 f7!

Black wisely tries to escape with his king, and he should have stuck to this plan on the coming moves.

8 h1 a5?! 9 c3 w6 10 c1 w6 11 g1 d7 12 g4

White has a clear initiative.

Giving up the pawn, since 9...h7? fails to 10 g5 hxg5 11 wh5+ gh8 12 fxg5 – Trifunovic.

10 xh6+ h7 11 h5

White converted his extra pawn into victory.

Position 336
A.Nimzowitsch-J.R.Capablanca
New York 1927

1...f5!

Fighting against the blockade on d4. Also interesting is 1...c6!? in the same spirit.

2 xf5+ xf5 3 w3

After 3 xh5? h8 4 w3 h4 White has a problem with the f4-pawn; e.g. 5 f2 hxf4 6 wxf4 xf4 7 xf4 wxb2+ and the queen clearly outshines the rooks.

3...g6 4 ed2 e4!

By this and his next move Black again directs all his attention to the d4-square.

5 d4 c4! 6 w2 wb5 7 g3

After 7 xc4 wxc4 8 d4 wb3 Black keeps the initiative.

7...xd4 8 cd4

Since 8 xd4? failed to 8...e2, White finally had to give up his blockade.

8...w4 9 g2 b5!

Opening a new front. The game concluded 10 g1 b4 11 axb4 axb4 12 gh2 w1! (zugzwang) 13 g3 wh1 14 d3 e1 15 f3 d1 16 b3 c1 17 e3 f1 and White resigned.

Position 337
T.V.Petrosian-V.Simagin
Moscow 1956

1 exf5!

Preparing a blockade on e4.

1...gxf5
Obviously 1...\textit{xf}5 just helps White to accomplish his plan by 2 \textit{c}e4.

2 \textit{g}4!

Winning the battle for the e4-square.

2...\textit{fxg}4 3 \textit{c}e4

The immediate 3 \textit{fxg}4 looks strong as well.

3...\textit{xf}4

After 3...\textit{gx}f3 4 \textit{xf}3 \textit{xf}4 5 \textit{c}e3, with ideas like \textit{g}1+, White obtains a strong initiative.

4 \textit{b}7 \textit{c}7 5 \textit{fxg}4 \textit{e}8 6 \textit{g}5

Clearing the d1-h5 diagonal for the queen with excellent attacking prospects.

Position 338

S.Gligoric-V.Smyslov
Yugoslavia-USSR match, Kiev 1959

1...\textit{c}4!

Preparing ...\textit{c}6-e7-d5 with a blockade. Weaker is 1...\textit{ac}8?! 2 \textit{c}4!, preventing this idea.

2 \textit{c}2 \textit{c}6l 3 \textit{g}4

Or 3 \textit{cd}1 \textit{e}7 4 \textit{c}1 \textit{d}5 5 \textit{a}3 \textit{c}6! with the strong threat of 6...\textit{d}e3.

3...\textit{e}7 4 \textit{h}2 \textit{c}6 5 \textit{g}3 \textit{b}5

Setting the pawn majority into motion.

6 a4 a6 7 \textit{b}1 \textit{ab}8 8 \textit{d}2 \textit{xa}4

8...\textit{xa}8 was a good alternative, keeping the option of a ...\textit{b}5-\textit{b}4 breakthrough.

9 \textit{a}1 \textit{a}8 10 \textit{xa}4 \textit{wc}7 11 \textit{a}2 \textit{b}6 12 \textit{gxf}5 \textit{exf}5 13 \textit{c}1 \textit{d}5 14 \textit{e}2 a5 15 \textit{c}2 \textit{b}3!

An appealing exchange sacrifice that creates two connected passed pawns and further strengthens Black's light square control. The game continued 16 \textit{xb}3 \textit{xb}3 17 \textit{a}4 \textit{f}8 18 \textit{b}2 \textit{e}3!, preparing ...\textit{c}4, with a clear initiative, now that 19 \textit{wxe}3? fails to 19...\textit{wc}6.

Position 339

J.Hellsten-L.Dworakowski
Hallsberg 1993

1 \textit{e}5!

Sacrificing a pawn to install a blockade on e4 with the knight, which will enhance a future attack. 1 \textit{f}5?! was less promising due to 1...\textit{wd}4, preparing ...\textit{d}6-\textit{d}5.

1...\textit{dxe}5 2 \textit{d}e4

Another move order is 2 \textit{f}5 \textit{wh}4 3 \textit{d}e4.

2...\textit{wh}4

Or 2...\textit{we}6 3 \textit{f}5! \textit{gxf}5 4 \textit{dg}5! with a strong attack.

3 \textit{f}5! \textit{c}5 4 \textit{ag}4 \textit{wh}6 5 \textit{ff}2!

Activating the queen and covering the knight on e3.

5...\textit{dxe}4?!

This just accelerates White's attack, but after 5...\textit{dd}3 6 \textit{wd}2 \textit{dd}8 7 \textit{dg}5 Black was also under pressure.

6 \textit{axe}4 \textit{ac}8 7 \textit{ag}4 \textit{ff}8 8 \textit{ff}6!

Now the attack is irresistible.

8...\textit{xf}5 9 \textit{hh}4 \textit{gg}7 10 \textit{xf}x7 \textit{gg}8 11 \textit{gg} \textit{g}5 12 \textit{cg}5 \textit{cg}6 13 \textit{ff}6+ \textit{ff}8 14 \textit{hh}8

Black resigned.

Position 340

Y.Balashov-M.Taimanov
Moscow 1986

1...\textit{g}5!

Sacrificing a pawn in order to establish a powerful dark square blockade.

2 \textit{fxg}5

Or 2 \textit{g}3 \textit{gxf}4 3 \textit{gxf}4 \textit{hh}6 4 \textit{de}2 \textit{ag}8 with counterplay.

2...\textit{de}5

Black immediately seizes the blocking square and creates the threat of 3...\textit{c}4. The immediate 2...\textit{h}6?! was also interesting.

3 \textit{d}4 \textit{h}6!

Exploiting tactical motifs along the
c1-h6 diagonal.

4 g6!

The only way to keep the balance – Taimanov.

4...fxg6 5 h4 g5 6 a5xe5

Swapping the blockader before Black goes 6...h5g7.

6...dxe5 7 Qxd1 c7 8 b6 ac8

With the plan of...h6-h5 and...h6(+).

Thanks to his bishop pair and dark square control, Black is slightly better.

Position 341

D.Bunzmann-J.Hodgson
German League 1999

1.c5!

Black has assessed that the d5-pawn can be safely blocked on d6, after which the pawn itself will restrict several of the white pieces. Less promising was 1.cxd5?! 2 ad1, followed by 3 axd5 or even 3 af4, after which White’s activity compensates for the bishop pair.

2 Qxd1 Qd6 3 xb5 a6!

Securing future play with...b7-b5.

4 Qxd6 Qxd6 5 a4 b5! 6 Qc3

Obviously 6 axb5 axb5 7 Qxb5? failed to 7...Qa6.

6.a7 7 Qc2

This time the attempt to grab a pawn by 7 axb5 axb5 8 Qxb5? backfires after 8...Qb8!.

7...Qe8 8 axb5 axb5 9 a1 a1 10 a1 Qb1 11 Qd1 b4! 12 Qa2 Qe2

Attacking the weak b2-pawn with a strong initiative.

Position 342

A.Konstantinopolsky-A.Kotov
Baku 1946

1...Qe7!

Provoking the e4-e5 advance in order to install a blockade on d5.

2 e5 Qd5 3 Qd2 h4!

The simplest choice, creating a new weakness. In contrast, the game continued 3...Qa3 4 Qf2 f6 5 Qhx5 Qxa2 6 Qe1 Qxb3 7 Qg6 with some complications.

4 Qf2 Qg6 5 Qe1 hxg3 6 hxg3 Qe6!

Preparing...Qe7 with a more efficient defence of the f7-pawn.

7 Qg2 Qe7 8 Qh1 Qg4!

Parrying the threat of 9 Qh5. Thanks to his strong knight and the weak pawns on d4 and g3, Black has a more comfortable game.

Position 343

A.Karpov-M.Taimanov
USSR Spartakiad, Moscow 1983

1 Qxf5!

Preparing a blockade by Qf3 and Qd4, even at the cost of a pawn. 1 Qf3?! was less precise due to 1...d4! 2 Qxf5 Qxf3 3 Qxf3 exf5 with a slight black edge – Karpov.

1...exf5

After 1...gxh5?! 2 Qf3 the black king is under a cloud.

2 Qf3! Qxc2 3 Qd4 Qc6

The e6-square must be kept under control, e.g. 3...Qxb3? 4 Qh4! with a far improved version of the game, or 3...Qc7? 4 Qg5 h6 5 e6! with a strong attack.

4 Qh4!

Not just threatening a rook, but also enabling the tactical idea of 5 e6 fxe6 6 Qf6.

4...Qe8 5 e6! fxe6

The other captures failed to 6 Qg5. Now 6 Qf6? runs into 6...e5!, but White has a stronger option.

6 Qe5 Qc7 7 Qxg6! Qg7 8 Qe5

By now the powerful dark square block-
ade and the exposed black king outweigh the pawn.
8...\textit{w}e7 9 \textit{w}g3 \textit{w}ec8 10 \textit{w}f1 \textit{w}xc7 11 \textit{w}f3 \textit{w}h8

At this point, simplest was 12 \textit{w}xg7+! \textit{w}xg7 13 \textit{w}xe6 \textit{w}xd4 14 \textit{w}xd4 \textit{w}d2 15 \textit{w}xe1 \textit{w}xd1 16 \textit{w}xd1, keeping the blockade with a clear advantage – Karpov.

**Position 344**

J.H.Donner-M.Tal
Bled 1961

1...\textit{e}4!

By advancing the e-pawn before it is blocked by \textit{c}c3-e4, Black frees the a1-h8 diagonal and the e-file for an attack on the white king.

2 \textit{w}xe4

2 \textit{w}xe4? loses outright to 2...\textit{w}e8!, while after 2 \textit{w}xe4 \textit{w}f6! 3 \textit{d}d1 \textit{f}3, followed by 4...\textit{w}a1, Black obtains a strong initiative – Tal.

2...\textit{d}d4+ 3 \textit{w}f1

Or 3 \textit{w}h2 \textit{w}h6+ 4 \textit{w}h3 \textit{f}3! 5 \textit{w}f1 \textit{w}h7 with strong pressure.

3...\textit{f}3!

In the same spirit as two moves ago, before White arranges a blockade by \textit{g}2-f3.

4 \textit{w}xf3 \textit{w}xg4

Thanks to the double threat at f3 and g1, Black wins material.

5 \textit{w}f6+ \textit{w}xf6 6 \textit{w}e8+ \textit{w}h7 7 \textit{w}e7+ \textit{w}g7! 8 \textit{w}xg7+ \textit{w}xg7

Tal later converted his extra exchange into victory.

**Position 345**

Xu Jun-A.Ambarchumjan
China-CIS match, Beijing 1991

1...\textit{e}1xg2!

Sacrificing the exchange to install a blockade on d5. In contrast, 1...\textit{w}dd8? 2 d5! yields White a dangerous initiative – Ribli.

2 \textit{w}xd7 \textit{w}xd7 3 \textit{w}xe2 \textit{w}xc4 4 \textit{w}a1

The radical 4 d5?! exd5 5 \textit{w}xd5 \textit{w}xd5 6 \textit{w}e4 fails to 6...\textit{w}c5! and Black keeps the extra material.

4...\textit{d}d5 5 \textit{w}xd5!

Immediately fighting against the enemy blockade.

5...\textit{w}xd5+ 6 \textit{w}f3 \textit{b}5! 7 \textit{w}xd5 exd5

Now the minimal material deficit is compensated by White’s passive bishop and the potential passed pawn on the b-file.

8 \textit{w}c3 \textit{b}4 9 \textit{w}e1 \textit{a}5 10 \textit{h}4 \textit{h}5 11 \textit{b}b1 \textit{b}b8! 12 \textit{w}d3 \textit{a}4!

Prophylaxis against 13 \textit{a}3, which can now be met by 13...\textit{b}3. The game concluded 13 \textit{w}h3 \textit{d}d6 14 \textit{g}4 \textit{hxg}4+ 15 \textit{w}xg4 \textit{a}3 16 \textit{b}b2 \textit{c}c4 17 \textit{b}b1 with a draw.

**Position 346**

D.Slavov-B.Chatalbashev
Bulgarian Team Championship 2003

1...\textit{c}5!

Finishing off Black’s idea of ...\textit{d}d7-c5 with a blockade. In contrast, the game saw 1 h3? \textit{w}xf3 2 \textit{w}xf3 \textit{d}d7 3 \textit{d}d1 \textit{c}c5 with a typical “good knight vs. bad bishop” scenario.

1...\textit{b}xc5

White is also better after 1...\textit{d}d7 2 cxb6 \textit{cxb}6 3 \textit{w}b5! or 2...\textit{b}xb6 3 \textit{w}c1.

2 \textit{w}c1 \textit{d}d7

Or 2...\textit{w}xf3 3 \textit{w}xf3!, keeping the \textit{e}2-b5 resource.

3 \textit{w}b5!

Thus White recovers the pawn and also gets rid of his “bad” bishop.

3...\textit{e}7 4 \textit{w}xd7 \textit{xd}7 5 \textit{w}xc5

Preparing \textit{d}d2-c4 with some advantage thanks to the superior pawn structure.
Position 347
N.Short-Ni Hua
Beijing (rapid) 2003

1...e4!
A strong pawn sacrifice, which creates a passed pawn on the f-file and enables a blockade on e5.

2 fxe4 f4 3 âiect
Or 3 âe2 âe5 with a huge advantage.

3...f3! 4 âwd2 âe5
More precise was 4...f2! first, e.g. 5 âe3 âe5 6 g5 âxf3+ 7 âxf3 âxf3 with a clear advantage – Ni Hua.

5 g5 âg6 6 âg1 âg4 7 âb1 âf7!
Preparing 8...âf8, followed by...f3-f2.

8 c5 bxc5 9 bxc5 dxc5 10 h3
Or 10 âxc5 âaf8 11 âf2 âd7! with ideas like...âg4 and...âf4.

10...âaf8!
With the strong threat of 11...f2.

11 âf2 âh5 12 âc3 âxh3 13 âxh3 âg4!
Decisive. There followed 14 âh2 âxh2 15 âxh2 f2 16 âd3 âf3! and Black soon won.

Position 348
J.H.Donner-M.Tal
Zürich 1959

1...âwb6!
In order to undermine the enemy blockade by 2...âwb4.

2 âab1
White has to spend a tempo defending the b2-pawn, since 2 a5 âxb2 3 e5 dxe5 4 âab1 âa3 or 4 âfb1 âd2 isn’t satisfactory for him.

2...âwb4 3 âf1
After 3 âxb4?! cxb4 the black knight enters on c5 with great effect.

3...c4!
After breaking the white blockade, Black is able to move his queenside majority for-ward.

4 âe2 b5 5 axb5 axb5 6 âh1 âxc3
Not 6...âc5?! 7 e5 with unnecessary counterplay.

7 bxc3 âxc3 8 âxb5?
For better or worse, the active 8 e5 had to be tried.

8...âd3!
Suddenly the c-pawn has turned into a major factor.

9 âe1 c3 10 âb1 âc5
With the double threat of 11...âxe4 and 11...c2 12 âc1 âb3. White resigned.

Position 349
T.V.Petrosian-S.Gligoric
Varna Olympiad 1962

1 âe1!
Faced with the threat of...e5-e4, White gives up the exchange in order to establish a blockade on e4. Instead, 1 âd1? e4 led to a strong black initiative, while after 1 âe2?! âd3 2 âe4 âxe4 3 âxd3 âg3+! Black wins material anyway, since 4 hgx3? fxg3 5 âe4 âh5+ leads to mate.

1...âd3
Or 1...âe8 2 âe4 and White achieves his blockade.

2 âfe2 âxe1 3 âxe1
Black has won the exchange, but his rooks aren’t very useful.

3...âe8 4 c5 âff8 5 âe4!
Completing the blockade initiated four moves ago. By now neither side can make progress without taking considerable risks, so a draw was agreed.

Position 350
S.Savchenko-A.Iljushin
Linares 1998

1 g3!
In order to keep the kingside blocked before getting on with the attack on the opposite flank. In contrast, the straightforward 1 bxc6 dxc6 2 b5!? permits 2 f4!, intending ...\(\text{f5}\) as well as ...g5-g4 with counterplay.

1... \(\text{g7}\)

Thanks to White’s clever first move, he can now meet 1...g4 with 2 f4! and 1...f4 with 2 g4!.

2 bxc6 dxc6 3 b5!

Removing the main defender of Black’s queenside. With play just on “his” flank, White is strategically winning.

3...\(\text{f7}\) 4 dxc6 bxc6 5 \(\text{wb2}\) d8 6 b8! xxb8 7 wb8 \(\text{we8}\) 8 c8

Making room for the rook. There followed:

8...\(\text{d7}\) 9 a4 \(\text{f7}\) 10 a5 \(\text{we7}\) 11 b8 f4 12 g4! h6 13 a6 \(\text{we8}\) 14 \(\text{a2!}\) \(\text{f8}\) 15 b4 \(\text{g6}\)
16 \(\text{xd7}\)

With the white king escaping to h3, Black resigned.

**Position 352**

**L.Portisch-R.Hübner**

Montreal 1979

1 \(\text{wa7!}\)

Initiating an attack on b7 before Black manages to castle and connect his rooks.

1... \(\text{e7}\)

After 1...\(\text{c5?}\) 2 \(\text{xc5}\) \(\text{xc5}\) 3 \(\text{xb7}\) White wins a healthy pawn.

2 \(\text{c1!}\) \(\text{d7}\) 3 \(\text{xc8+}\) \(\text{xc8}\) 4 \(\text{c1}\) \(\text{d7}\)

The desired ...0-0 is just one move away; however...

5 \(\text{wa8+!}\) \(\text{d8}\) 6 \(\text{g6}\) \(\text{f7}\)

After 6...0-0? 7 \(\text{c5!}\) \(\text{e8}\) 8 \(\text{b6}\) White wins material.

7 \(\text{b6!}\)

7 \(\text{b8}\) \(\text{g6}\) is less convincing – Gligoric.

7...\(\text{xb6}\) 8 \(\text{xe8}\) \(\text{g6}\)

Or 8...\(\text{xf2+}\) 9 \(\text{g2!}\) with 10 \(\text{g8(+) next – Gligoric.}\)

9 \(\text{we8!}\) \(\text{xe8}\) 10 \(\text{xe8}\)

With a winning endgame.

**Position 353**

**V.Alatortsev-I.Boleslavsky**

USSR Championship, Moscow 1950

1... \(\text{g5!}\)

Attacking White at his most vulnerable point, g2.

2 \(\text{g3}\)

After 2 0-0? \(\text{h3}\) Black wins material.
2...\text{N}ae8 3 0-0 \text{Nh}3! 4 f4

The rook couldn’t move, e.g. 4 \text{N}e1? \text{N}xf2! 5 \text{N}xf2 \text{Ne}3 mate – Bondarevsky.

4...\text{N}xf1!

A strong sacrifice that will leave the enemy king in trouble on the light squares.

4...\text{N}c5+?! 5 \text{N}f2 was less convincing.

5 \text{fxg}5 \text{N}xe2 6 \text{N}c3 \text{Ng}2!

Seizing the long diagonal in order to enhance the attack.

7 \text{N}d3 \text{Nf}3 8 \text{Nf}1

There was nothing better; e.g. 8 \text{N}f1 \text{N}xh2 9 \text{N}d4 c5! 10 \text{N}xd6 \text{Nc}6+ 11 \text{N}e1 \text{N}h1+ 12 \text{N}d2 \text{Nxa}1 13 \text{N}e6+ \text{Nf}7 and Black wins.

8...\text{Ng}2+ 9 \text{Nh}1 \text{Nc}6!

Preparing a decisive discovered check.

10 \text{Nf}8+ \text{Nf}8 11 \text{Nf}1+ \text{Nf}2+

White resigned.

\textbf{Position 355}

\textbf{R.Ovetchkin-N.Efanov}

Nizhnij Tagil 2007

1 e4!

Putting some pressure on Black before he castles out of trouble.

1...\text{N}w5

Preferable seems 1...0-0!? 2 cxd5 exd5 3 exd5 \text{N}f5 4 \text{N}d2 \text{N}ad8 with some compensation, whereas 1...d4?! runs into 2 e5! \text{N}e7 3 \text{N}e4 with a grip on the dark squares.

2 exd5 exd5 3 cxd5 \text{Nxc}3

Or 3...cxd5? 4 \text{N}b5+!, harassing the black king.

4 bxc3

The intermediate 4 \text{N}e4+! was also strong.

4...\text{cxd}5 5 c4! \text{N}e6

If 5...0-0, then 6 cxd5 \text{N}f5 7 \text{N}b3 with an extra pawn.

6 \text{N}ab1!

Creating new threats with every move.

6...\text{N}c7 7 \text{N}a4+! \text{N}c6

Or 7...\text{N}d7 8 \text{N}a3, preventing ...0-0.

8 \text{N}a3 dxc4 9 \text{N}d4! \text{N}d7 10 \text{N}xe6 \text{N}xe6 11 \text{N}xc4 \text{N}f7

At the same time Black resigned. 12 \text{N}f3+ is one of various winning options.

\textbf{Position 356}

\textbf{J.Lautier-A.Karpov}

Linares 1995

1...\text{bxc}5!

Sacrificing the exchange in the fight for the initiative. 1...\text{N}c6 2 \text{b}5 is less forceful.

2 \text{N}xc7 \text{N}xc7 3 \text{N}c3

3 dxc5? failed to 3...\text{N}a5+, while after 3 0-0? \text{N}b8 4 \text{N}c3 \text{N}b6 5 \text{N}d3 e5?! Black obtains a strong initiative.
3...e5!

Clearing the centre before White castles away from the e-file.

4 c4

After 4 0-0? exd4 5 cxd4 0-0 b6 Black wins a piece, while 4 dx5 d4, followed by...

5...dx5, or 4 dx5 d4, followed by...

also favours him.

4...exd4 5 cxd4 e8=+ 6 f1

Or 6 c2 d4 7 c2 e5, with threats like...

8...c4 and 8...xd3+ 9 xd3 e3.

6...wb6 7 f5 d4 8 wd2 e5

With ideas like...

...c5-c4 and...

b7-b6 Black keeps a strong initiative. The game continued 9 e1 e6 10 b1 b7 11 f2 d3! 12 h1 c4+ 13 h3 h5=+ 14 h3 g6! and the exposure of White’s king soon took its toll.

Position 357
J.Hellsten-G.Dalaklis
Agios Kirykos 2004

1 f4!

Seizing the initiative without worrying about a weak square on e5. 1 e3?! 2 g5 was less ambitious.

1...exf4 2 xf4 b6 3 c4 0-0 4 e5!

Just in time, before Black installs a knight on e5.

4...g5?!

4...h2! 5 f8 6 e4 c5 7 d6

Creating the threat of 8 xf7 xf7 9 c4.

7...f5 8 exf6?

Transposing to a superior endgame, though 8 wc4+ followed by 9 e6 was also strong.

8...exe4 9 re4 e3+ 10 f1 hxf6

Or 10...dx5 11 e5!.

11 c4+ h7?

A lesser evil was 11...g7 12 xf6 xf6 13 a1 e8 14 d6 h8 with some drawing chances. Thus the correct move order for White was 11 xf6+ 12 xf6 12 de6, ruling out a8-h8.

12 xf6+ xf6

Or 12...xf6 13 fe1! e8 14 b5 f7 15 caf1 etc.

13 d6

Faced with material losses, Black resigned.

Position 358
J.Hellsten-R.Sergejev
Hinnerup 1993

1 ed5!

Sacrificing a pawn in order to clear the light squares for the d3-bishop. 1 af1?! wb4 is less convincing.

1...xd5 2 exd5 ec8

After 2...wxd5 3 c4! wa5 4 e4 followed by...d5, Black comes under pressure, but...

...g6? was a more solid choice, when...

...e4 preparing h4-h5 keeps some initiative.

3 b4! wxd5

Or 3...wd8 4 af1 ag5 5 f5 h4 6 w4, keeping up the pressure.

4 c4 wc6 5 e4 wc7

After 5...wc4? 6 xe5 dx5 7 xh7+ xh7 8 cc4 xc4 9 wd3+ White wins.

6 af1!

The last piece joins the attack, thus enhancing a future d5.

6...f6 7 f5 wb8 8 vh4 g6 9 xe5 fx5

If 9...dxe5, then 10 xg6 xc5+ 11 bxc5 hxg6 12 wg6+ wg7 13 wg5 and wins.

10 xh7! f6 11 h6 xc4 12 xg6+ f8

White soon won.
Position 359
B.Gulko-A.Karpov
Reykjavik 1991

1...b5!
Initiating an attack on the queenside, which indirectly threatens the safety of the white king.

2 axb5
Or 2 cxb5 axb5 3 a5 c5! with a clear edge – Karpov.

2...axb5 3 cxb5 a6!
The immediate 3...AXB5?! permits 4 Aa5! c6 5 Axa1 with an annoying pin.

4 Axd1 Axb5 5 Axe1 Axe8
Enabling a future knight manoeuvre via f8.

6 Axa8 Axa8 7 Aa1 Ad8!
Keeping the rook in order to enhance a future attack.

8 Aa2
Or 8 Ag3 g6!?, intending ...d6-d5 – Karpov.

8...c6 9 Ac2 Af8! 10 Ag3?!
White should have restricted the enemy knight by 10 f5, although Black maintains the initiative after 10...d5.

10...Ae6! 11 Af5 wc7
With the idea of ...c6-c5. There followed 12 fxe5 dx5 13 Ac1 c5 14 bxc5 wxc5 and the white king proved fatally exposed.

Position 360
N.Grandelius-V.Nithander
Swedish Championship, Växjö 2008

1 Aa1!
Activating the last piece, without worrying about the doubled f-pawns.

1...Af3+
After 1...Aa4? 2 Axe5! Axe5 3 h3 Aa5 4 Axc8 Axc8 5 g4! Axb3 6 Axe5 White is winning.

2 gxf3 Ad4 3 dx7
Thanks to his strong first move White now possesses a powerful passed pawn.

3...Ah3 4 Ad5!
Vacating the c4-square for the rook.

4 Aa6 5 Aa4! Axb2 6 Axc6
This and the next move eliminate Black’s more active pieces and weaken his defence of the crucial c8-square.

6 Axc6 7 Axc6 fx6 8 Axd3!
Removing the annoying pawn on d3 and enabling a future attack with Ah4.

8...f6 9 Axf6+ Axf6 10 c8A Axc8 11 Axc8 Aa8 12 wc3!
The exchange of queens will facilitate realizing the material advantage. There followed 12...e5 13 Axa7 h5 14 f4! Aa4 15 fxe5 Axe5 16 Axc5! Aa5+ 17 Ac1 Axc3 18 Axc3 and White won.

Position 361
L.Ljubojevic-S.Gligoric
Match (game 3), Belgrade 1979

1...Ah5!
Preparing ...Af4 and ...f7-f5 with a kingside initiative.

2 Aa1 Aa4 3 0-0 f5! 4 e5?!
Now the black pawns acquire unexpected mobility. A lesser evil was 4 exf5 Axf5, when Black maintains pressure – Gligoric.

4...d6! 5 exd6 Axd6 6 Ash1 e5!
A strong advance that will soften up the h1-a8 diagonal for the bishop. In contrast, 6...Axe2 7 Axe2 Ah2? failed to 8 f4.

7 Ag1 e4! 8 fxe4 Axe2
At the precise moment to secure the control of the long diagonal.

9 Aa2 Aa4 10 Ac4 Axf6!
The white king is starting to feel uneasy.

11 Af3 Ah6 12 h3 Ab7 13 Ad4 g5!
Black has a strong attack. There followed
Position 362
E.Geller-K.Lerner
USSR Championship, Minsk 1979

1...e1!

Preparing d3 and f2-f4 in order to attack Black’s centre and, indirectly, his king.
1...h3?! c7 is less powerful.
1...c7 2 d3 d6

Or 2...b6 3 f4 b7 4 h3 d8 5 a3!, heading for e7 with strong pressure.

3 f4! g7 4 h1 exf4

If 4...e8, then 5 f5 g5 6 f3!, intending 7 h5 – Geller.
5 gxf4 e8 6 d1 e8 7 d1!

The knight retreats so that the bishop on b2 enhances a future e4-e5 or f4-f5 advance.

7...d7 8 b1 d8 9 e3 d6?

9...c8 was a lesser evil – Geller.

10 e5! fxe5 11 fxe5 f5 12 c4 e6 13 h3!

Fighting for the d6-square.

13...g8 14 d6 ed4 15 xd4 xd4 16 f7

With threats like 17 c5 and 17 xd7 xd7 18 e6, White is winning.

Position 363
J.Hellsten-S.Brynell
Swedish Championship, Gothenburg 2006

1...h3!

Intending g5-e6 with pressure on Black’s kingside.

1...e7

Both 1...fxg4?! 2 g5 and 1...h6?! 2 g5 hxg5 3 fxg5 g7 4 e2, followed by ef4, yield White a clear initiative.

2 g5 xg5 3 fxg5 g8

Or 3...e5 4 e2, intending f4-e6; e.g. 4...b5 5 d4 bxc4 6 e6 d7 7 bxc4! with interesting compensation for the piece.

4 gxf5! gxf5+

After 4...gxh5 5 h1 e5 6 e2 the control of the long diagonal implies a long-term plus.

5 h1 e8

Not 5...xf5? 6 xe4 xf1+ 7 ef1 xd5 8 c3 etc.

6 xg6 hXg6 7 g1 h6 8 g2 h7 9 f3?

A tactical slip in time trouble. After 9...g8 10 f2!, both 10...ef8 11 g3 and 10...e5 11 f6 let White keep the initiative, but nothing more.

10 xg6 xg6 11 xg6 xg6 12 g2+ f5 13 e4!

In view of 13...xe4 14 g4+ xe3 15 c1+ f2 16 g1 mate, Black resigned.

Position 364
S.Volkov-G.Tunik
Russian Championship, Krasnodar 2002

1...b6!

A pawn sacrifice to create some activity before White consolidates. 1...a6?! 2 e3 is less promising.

2 cxb6 xb6 3 d4

After 3 e2?! a6 the white king becomes exposed.

3...xd4 4 xxd4

If 4 cxd4, then 4...a6 5 c5 b7! with compensation – Tunik.

4...c6! 5 c4

Or 5 d3 a6! 6 xxa6 xxa6 7 0-0 fd8 8 xe3 c5, attacking e4 while threatening both b3 and d3.

5...b7
Black finally accepts the queen exchange, aware that he will soon be able to create new threats.

6 \(\text{Wxc6} \text{Axc6} 7 \text{Ad3} \text{Aad8} 8 \text{Ac2} \text{Ab5} 9 \text{O-O!}\)

In view of 9 \(\text{Oxb2?!} \text{Oxd6} \text{or} 9 \text{Oa4?!} \text{Oxc3!},\) intending 10 \(\text{Oxc6} \text{Axd1+},\) White returns the pawn. There followed 9...\(\text{Oxc3} 10 \text{Ee1} \text{Aa4!}\)

11 \(\text{Oxa4} \text{Oxa4} 12 \text{Oe3} \text{Ad7} 13 \text{Eec1} \text{Ab8!}\)

14 \(\text{Ac4} \text{Ab3} 15 \text{Af2} \text{Cc3} \text{with equality.}\)

**Position 365**

**A.Yermolinsky-J.Manion**

Chicago 1995

1 \(\text{h6!!}\)

A strong blow that prepares \(\text{Ac1}\) with new threats and destroys Black’s kingside before he castles into safety.

1...\(\text{Wxd5}\)

1...0-0? fails to 2 \(\text{Ac1} \text{gxe6} 3 \text{xc4},\) followed by 4 \(\text{xc8}\) and 5 \(\text{g4+!};\) but 1...\(\text{gxe6} 2 \text{d5} \text{Wxd5} \text{was a lesser evil, when 3 \text{xc4}\}

\(\text{Wa8} 4 \text{Axd5!} \text{Ab8 5 \text{xa6 xc1 6 xc1 yells White a clear advantage thanks to his active bishop and the strong passed pawn on a2.}}\)

2 \(\text{g4!}\)

More convincing than 2 \(\text{Axe7!} \text{Ag8.}\)

2...\(\text{Cc5} 3 \text{Wxe7} \text{Wxd3}\)

White also wins material after 3...\(\text{Af8} 4 \text{Wxh7.}\)

4 \(\text{Wxh8+} \text{Ad7} 5 \text{Aab1!} \text{Cc7?}\)

5...\(\text{Ab5}\) was the last chance – Yermolinsky, when White can keep attacking by 6 \(\text{Ab5} \text{ab5} 7 \text{Wb8 Wd5 8 Ab1.}\)

6 \(\text{Ab8 Wg6} 7 \text{We8+} \text{Wxe6 8 Cc8+ Ad7 9 Cxc4}\)

\(\text{Wxh6 10 Aec8 Wf8 11 Wxa6 1-0}\)

**Position 366**

**B.Gelfand-N.Short**

Candidates match (game 2), Brussels 1991

1...\(\text{b5!}\)

Creating new threats, such as ...\(\text{e6 and b5-b4},\) before White consolidates by \(\text{f2 and h1.}\) Also interesting is 1...\(\text{g3+?!} 2 \text{hxg3 b5!},\) ruling out the 2 \(\text{e5} \text{option below – Aagaard.}\)

2 \(\text{Wxb5}\)

Now on 2 \(\text{f2?!}\) Black has 2...\(\text{e6!} 3 \text{Wa3 g4+! 4 fxg4 Wf6+ 5 g1 xg3 6 hgx3}\)

\(\text{Ae8! with a decisive attack, while after 2 \text{xB5 e6} 3 \text{Wa3 xg3 4 hxg3}\}

\(\text{Axb8 5 c3 g4! White is also under pressure – Short.}\)

Finally, 2...\(\text{e5?} is well met by 2...\(\text{b4 3 Bb5 e6 4 Wa4 g4 with attacking chances – Aagaard.}\)

2...\(\text{g3+ 3 hxg3 Axb8 4 Bd3 Bxb2}\)

Now all Black’s pieces are active, and the white king remains exposed.

5 \(\text{Ad2 Wb6 6 g4}\)

Again 6 \(\text{f2? runs into 6...g4+!,}\) intending 7 \(\text{fxg4 Wf6+ 8 g1 Ac1+ 9 Ac2}\)

\(\text{Wh6 mate – Short.}\)

6...\(\text{Wb8!}\)

Preparing to meet 7 \(\text{f2} by 7...\(\text{xg4+ 8 fxg4 Wf4+.}\)

7 \(\text{d1 Wg3 8 f2 Ab6}\)

Preparing \(\text{...Be6 with a clear initiative.}\)

**Position 367**

**A.Shirov-V.Salov**

Sicilian Tournament, Buenos Aires 1994

1...\(\text{g3!}\)

Exploiting the pin on the h-file in order
to achieve a favourable exchange.

2 \(\text{fxg3 Axg5+ 3 Ab1 Af6}\)

White’s attack has been neutralized.

4 \(\text{Ac4 Axb5 5 Ac7}\)

Or 5 \(\text{xb5 Ab6 6 Af1 Ae5! – Salov.}\)

5...\(\text{exf6 6 Axe2 Ab8 7 c3 Ad8 8 Ac4 Ab6}\)

Thanks to his more compact pawn structure Black is slightly better.
Position 368

W.Unzicker-J.H.Donner
Gothenburg Interzonal 1955

1...h6!

Exploiting the motif of a fork on f6 in order to swap Black’s strong fianchettoed bishop.

1...f5 2...xg7 hxg7 3...c3 a6 4...e3

To soften up the enemy queenside.

4...a5

Or 4...a6 5...c4!, with the double idea of 6 d6+ and 6 a5.

5...b5...c7 6...d6!

The further advanced this passed pawn, the stronger it becomes

6...d8

Or 6...c6 7...xc6...xc6 8...d7!...ad8 9...d6!, intending 9...xd7 10...ad1.

7...d5!

7 d7 was another good option, but the text has the merit of eliminating black counterplay.

7...xd5 8...xd5 e4 9...ad1

The d-pawn is now a giant. The game concluded 9...g7 10 d7...f6 11 h3...e6 12...c4...e7 13...d6!...a7 14...c3+...g8 15...f6!...a8 16...x7 and Black resigned in view of the queen loss.

Position 369

F.Gheorghiu-B.Spassky
Hastings 1965/66

1...eg4!

Supported by the tactic! line 2 hxg4...xe3, followed by a mortal ...Wh4+, Black takes his knight to the ideal e3-square. Less promising was 1...d3 2...xd3 cxd3 3...e1, followed by...xd3, or 1...g6 2 bxc4 bxc4 3...xc4 with unclear play.

2...e1...e3 3...xe3...xe3

The departure of White’s bishop has left him vulnerable on the dark squares.

4 bxc4...c8!

Increasing the pressure on the c-file. In contrast, the game continued 4...d4?! 5...d1!...xc3 6...xc3...xe4 7...xe4...xe4 8...d3 with equality.

5...xb5...d4 6...c1...a5! 7...f3...xb5

Black has a clear initiative.

Position 370

L.Sokolov-V.Ivanchuk
Wijk aan Zee 2006

1...b4!

By means of a minor tactical resource, Black manages to improve his badly placed knight.

2...b3

After 2 axb4?! cxb4 3...b5? b3+ Black wins.

2...c6 3 0-0...ad8 4...e4

Or 4...b5...b8 5...e3...xd1 6...xd1...d8 and Black is fine; e.g. 7...b1...d7 8...c3...xc3 9...xc3...d8 with equality – Ivanchuk.

4...h6 5...e3...e5!

After an unusual manoeuvre the knight has become a great piece.

6...xe5...xe5 7...xd8...xd8 8...xf6

The only way of escaping from the pin.

8...xe3 9...xe3...a6 10...g4...d2

Black has the initiative.

Position 371

V.Kotronias-E.Van den Doel
Wijk aan Zee 1995

1...de4!

Supported by some minor tactics White manages to exploit the dark square weaknesses in the enemy camp.

1...e7

After 1...dxe4? 2...xe4...xe5 3...f6+ White wins the piece back with interest.
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2  §f6+  $d8 3  §ce4!
Since 3...dx4 4  wxe4 leads to a mortal pin along the d-file, Black again has to accept the invasion of the enemy pieces on the dark squares.

3...c7 4  wC3  $d8?
The last chance was 4...a5 5  $c5  $c8 with a depressing position.

5  wa5+  $b8 6  wb4+  $c7 7  $c5!  $c8 8  $f7!
In view of 8...xd7 9  wb7 mate, Black resigned.

Position 372
S.Gordon-J.Donaldson
Bermuda 1995

1...b5!
Preparing a little trick that will alter the position to Black’s favour.

2  $a2?!
The unappealing 2  xxd5 exd5 3  $e2 was a lesser evil.

2...d4! 3  exd4 cxd4
Recovering the piece with a clear positional plus. White couldn’t avoid this scenario by 3  wb1? due to 3...xc3 4  bxc3 $e2+ winning a pawn.

4  $e5 dxc3 5  bxc3  wd6!
With a double threat at e5 and a3.

6  d4  wxa3 7  $d5  xd5 8  $a1  wd6
Black is winning.

Position 373
J.Johansson-R.Åström
Luleå 2004

1...$e5!
A strong tactical blow that eliminates White’s bishop pair and leaves his pawn structure in ruins.

2  dx5  $xc1+ 3  wc1  $xd3
With double threats at f3 and a3.

4  $c8+  $f8 5  $g2  wd4!
An ideal square for the queen, where it eyes e5 and f2 at the same time.

6  $c1?
More careful was 6  $a2, when 6...a5! followed by...b4 is one of several tempting options.

6...$d2! 7  $f1  g6
Preparing  ...$g7 and  ...$xa3 with a decisive advantage.

Position 374
L.Pachman-G.Barcza
Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1952

1  wd4!
Exploiting the fact that 1...$xh1? runs into 2  $g6! with mate, White secures a decent square for his rook. In contrast, 1  $h2? $ad8 yields Black plenty of compensation due to the awful rook on h2.

1...Wh5 2  $d5  $g6 3  $e1
Thanks to his extra pawn and active pieces, White is clearly better. There followed 3...e6 4  $d6 $g4 5  $xe6 fxe6 6  $d7 $h5 7  $xb7 $ad8 8  $d7 $xh4 9  $d1 and White soon created a decisive passed pawn on the queenside.

Position 375
S.Cicak-J.Hellsten
Swedish Championship,
Gothenburg 2006

1  $f4!
A pawn up, White should be happy to swap pieces, especially the active bishop on d6. In the game, he instead went for the tempting 1  $g5?, overlooking the strong reply 1...$d3!. Supported by the line 2  wxd3?  $xh2+ Black considerably improves his bishop and repels the enemy attack. There followed 2  $f3  h6 3  $h3  $e8! 4
\[\text{Solution} 376\]

E. Dervishi-V. Milov
Bratto 2003

1...\(\text{c}6\)

By exploiting the potential pin along the d-file, Black damages the enemy pawn structure. 1...\(\text{c}5\)!! 2 \(\text{ac}2\) was less convincing.

2 \(\text{fxe5} \text{dxe5} 3\) \(\text{c}3\)!

After 3 \(\text{cb}5\) \text{exd4} Black is better, but the text practically loses a pawn.

3...\(\text{xd}3\) 4 \(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{dd}8\)

Now White is unable to sustain all the exposed pawns on the fourth rank.

5 \(\text{a}4\)!! \(\text{a}8\) 6 \(\text{xb}6\) \(\text{a}2\) 7 \(\text{f}3\) \(\text{xe}4\)

Black is winning.

\[\text{Solution} 377\]

S. Smagin-C. Hoi
Copenhagen 1993

1 \(\text{e}6\)!

Supported by a tactical variation, White improves his rook and now threatens 2 \(\text{d}6\).

1...\(\text{xe}6\) 2 \(\text{fxe6} \text{xe}6\)

Or 2...\(\text{f}5\) 3 \(\text{e}1\) and the passed pawn decides – Smagin.

3 \(\text{h}4\) \(\text{h}6\) 4 \(\text{g}6\)!

The point. Black has no defence against the attack along the b1-h7 diagonal.

4...\(\text{g}7\) 5 \(\text{d}3\) \(\text{g}8\) 6 \(\text{h}7+\) \(\text{f}7\) 7 \(\text{g}6+\)

Black resigned.

\[\text{Position} 378\]

V. Kramnik-M. Adams
Biel Interzonal 1993

1 \(\text{e}3!\)

Withdrawing the queen from the exposed d4-square before taking actions on the kingside. Instead, the game continued 1 \(\text{g}4? \text{xf}4!\) (less clear is 1...\(\text{e}5\) 2 \(\text{fxe5} \text{dxe5} 3\) \(\text{e}3\) \(\text{f}4\) 4 \(\text{g}5?\), preparing \(\text{h}3\)) 2 \(\text{xf}4\) e5 3 \(\text{f}2\) \(\text{exf}4\) 4 \(\text{xf}4\) \(\text{e}5!\). Thanks to his small combination, Black has managed a strong grip on the dark squares, and after 5 \(\text{c}3\) \(\text{c}7\) 6 \(\text{d}2\) \(\text{e}7\) 7 \(\text{g}5\) \(\text{c}8\) 8 \(\text{fc}1\) \(\text{b}5!\), intending \(\text{cx}b5? \text{d}3!\), he had an easier game.

1...\(\text{e}6\)

After 1...\(\text{e}5?!\) 2 \(\text{f}5\) White takes over on the kingside.

2 \(\text{c}3\) \(\text{h}6\)

The typical 2...d5?! permits 3 \(\text{cxd}5\) \(\text{xd}5\) 4 \(\text{e}5\) with a white edge. After 2...\(\text{h}6\) there has arisen a position with chances for both sides.

\[\text{Position} 379\]

A. Yusupov-S. Dolmatov
Frunze 1979

1 \(\text{c}5!\)

Exploiting the fact that 1...\(\text{xc}5?\) fails to 2 \(\text{c}1\) followed by \(\text{d}7\). White creates a protected square on d6.

1...\(\text{dc}6\) 2 \(\text{dc}4+\) \(\text{h}7\) 3 \(\text{d}6!\)

Swapping the main defender of the black camp.

3...\(\text{xd}6\) 4 \(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{a}5\)

4...\(\text{e}4\) was preferable, securing this
pawn, when 5 \( \text{a6d} 1 \) followed by \( f2-f3 \) keeps
pressure.

5 \( f3! \) \( g6 \) 6 \( \text{a6d} 1 \) \( a4 \) 7 \( \text{b5!} \)

With the strong plan of \( \text{xc} 6 \) and \( \text{c} 4 \),
conquering the e5-pawn. The game con-
tinued 7...\( \text{xf} 6 \) 8 \( \text{xc} 6 \) \( \text{bxc} 6 \) 9 \( \text{e} 4 \) \( \text{e} 8 \) 10 \( \text{d} 6 + \)
\( \text{e} 6 \) 11 \( \text{b6!} \) and Black resigned in view of
11...\( \text{b} 8 \) 12 \( \text{d} 8 \) or 11...\( \text{xd} 6 \) 12 \( \text{cxd} 6 \) \( \text{b} 8 \)
13 \( \text{d} 7 \) \( \text{a} 6 \) 14 \( \text{c} 8 \) – Moiseev.

Position 380

A.Karpov-G.Kasparov
World Championship (game 17),
Lyons 1990

1 \( \text{c} 6 ! \)

Exploiting the motif of a back rank mate
in order to seize the open file.

1...\( \text{e} 5 \)

Indeed, 1...\( \text{xc} 6 \)! 2 \( \text{dxc} 6 \) \( \text{xc} 6 \) runs
into 3 \( \text{d} 8+ \) \( \text{h} 8 \) 4 \( \text{h} 6 \), while 2...\( \text{c} 7 \) 3
\( \text{d} 7 \) is also bad for Black.

2 \( \text{c} 3 ! \)

Forcing the enemy bishop to leave the
long diagonal. 2 \( \text{c} 2 \) \( \text{xc} 6 \) 3 \( \text{dxc} 6 \) \( \text{c} 7 \) is
less forcible.

2...\( \text{b} 8 \)

Both 2...\( \text{xc} 6 \)! 3 \( \text{dxc} 6 \) and 2...\( \text{xc} 3 \) 3
\( \text{xb} 3 \) \( \text{xc} 6 \) 4 \( \text{xc} 6 \) let White keep a
dangerous initiative.

3 \( \text{d} 4 \) \( \text{f} 6 \) 4 \( \text{a} 5 ! \)

Vacating \( c3 \) for the queen. Again Black
can't take twice on \( c6 \) due to the check on
\( d8 \).

4...\( \text{d} 6 \) 5 \( \text{wc} 3 \) \( \text{e} 8 \) 6 \( \text{a} 3 \)

With Black having been forced into pas-
sivity, White slowly improves his position.

6...\( \text{g} 7 \) 7 \( \text{g} 3 \) \( \text{e} 5 \) 8 \( \text{wc} 5 \) \( \text{h} 5 \) 9 \( \text{c} 7 ! \)

Winning the \( c7 \)-square for the rook.

9...\( \text{a} 1 \) 10 \( \text{f} 4 \) \( \text{w} 7 \) 11 \( \text{c} 7 \) \( \text{w} 8 \) 12 \( \text{d} 6 \) \( \text{g} 5 \)
13 \( \text{d} 7 \) \( \text{f} 8 \) 14 \( \text{d} 2 \) \( \text{e} 5 \) 15 \( \text{b} 7 ! \)

Black resigned in view of 16 \( \text{a} 5 \) on the
next move; e.g. 15...\( \text{h} 4 \) 16 \( \text{a} 5 ! \) \( \text{xa} 5 \) 17
\( \text{xe} 7+ \) \( \text{g} 6 \) 18 \( \text{wh} 7+ \) \( \text{h} 7 \) 19 \( \text{d} 8+ \) winning
the queen – Karpov.

Position 381

Mi. Tsetlin-E. Vasiukov
Tel Aviv 1982

1...\( \text{f} 5 ! \)

By means of some minor tactics Black
manages to advance his pawn majority.

2 \( \text{d} 5+?! \)

Black's point was 2 \( \text{xf} 5 ? \) \( \text{c} 6 ! \) 3 \( \text{g} 2 \)
\( \text{f} 8 \) 4 \( \text{g} 4 \) \( \text{f} 4 \) 5 \( \text{h} 5 \) \( \text{a} 8 \) with decisive
advantages. In contrast, 2 \( \text{xb} 7 \) \( \text{b} 7 \) 3 \( \text{a} 4 \)
4 \( \text{d} 4 \) would have reduced his edge to
some extent.

2...\( \text{xd} 5 \) 3 \( \text{xd} 5 \) \( \text{h} 6 ! \)

Preventing a knight move to \( g5 \). Now
White has a problem with the \( d5 \)-pawn.

4 \( \text{ac} 1 \) \( \text{wf} 7 \) 5 \( \text{fd} 1 \) \( \text{ad} 8 \) 6 \( \text{a} 3 \) \( \text{e} 4 ! \)

Before taking the pawn Black continues
his promising kingside expansion.

7 \( \text{e} 1 \) \( \text{f} 4 \) 8 \( \text{d} 4 \)

Desperation in a difficult position.

8...\( \text{xa} 3 \) 9 \( \text{c} 6 \) \( \text{xd} 5 \)

Black soon converted his material
advantage.

Position 382

C. Peptan-M. Vukic
Ljubljana 1997

1...\( \text{xc} 3 \) 2 \( \text{bxc} 3 \) \( \text{xc} 4 ! \)

By means of a tactical trick Black man-
ages to exchange pieces, thus neutralizing
the enemy attack. The attempt to avoid this
by 2 \( \text{xc} 3 \) failed to 2...\( \text{e} 4 \) 3 \( \text{xe} 7 \) \( \text{xc} 3 \).
3 \( \text{xc} 4 ? ! \)

3 \( \text{xf} 6 \) was a lesser evil, when 3...\( \text{c} 7 \) 4
\( \text{xe} 7 \) \( \text{xe} 7 \), followed by \( \text{fc} 8 \), yields Black
a slight advantage thanks to his superior
pawn structure.

3...\( \text{d} 5 ! \)
The point.

4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{gf}}}}\textcolor{blue}{3} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{a}}}}\textcolor{blue}{6}! 5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{xb}}}}\textcolor{blue}{6}

Or 5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{h}}}}\textcolor{blue}{6} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{h}}}}\textcolor{blue}{5} 6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{g}}}}\textcolor{blue}{4} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{f}}}}\textcolor{blue}{5}\textcolor{green}{I}, soon recovering the material with interest – Har Zvi.

5...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{xe}}}}\textcolor{blue}{2} 6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{xd}}}}\textcolor{blue}{5} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\text{xd}}}}\textcolor{blue}{5}

Black later converted his material advantage.
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