

Jerzy Konikowski
Uwe Bekemann

Openings Queen's Pawn Games

read – understand – play



JBV Chess Books

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Preface

All openings in which White begins with 1.d2-d4 without soon continuing with the move c2-c4 form the group of so-called 'Queen's Pawn Games'. In this volume of our series 'read - understand - play' we examine and explain more than ten of them, including openings that are very popular nowadays, such as the Trompowsky Attack and the London System.

The Richter-Veresov Attack, on the other hand, is an example of openings that are rarely chosen in practice, but which can be used as a surprise weapon. The Blackmar-Diemer Gambit is kept alive by a loyal 'fan club' that sees itself almost as family. Even these few names make it clear how multifaceted the different versions of Queen's Pawn Games are.

As usual in this series, we have based our work on the specific needs of the following groups of players:

- Beginners who already know all the rules and can handle them correctly, who know the basics of strategy and tactics and now need the basic equipment for the world of openings.
- Players who already have some experience but feel a deficit, especially in the opening, and who want to fill this gap quickly and with limited effort.
- Recreational players who simply want to play a solid opening and reach a position that allows them to play interesting and entertaining chess.

Once again, we have attached great importance to presenting the ideas and plans associated with an opening. Basically, in the main lines every move relevant to understanding the opening paths is explained. We want our readers to know why they are playing a move and why exactly this move is appropriate right now. This approach serves to enable them to play their openings in their own games with sense and reason.

The material is divided into 11 chapters, each dealing with a specific opening. The basics of more extensive systems are first presented in a general introduction, which also shows a material structure for better orientation. Important subsystems are treated in separate side lines.

We recommend working through each chapter from the beginning to make sure you don't miss any important information. In order to avoid repetition and also to save space, moves that have already been discussed in detail are not explained again.

Wherever possible, we looked for promising options that haven't been played too often in tournament practice. Our intention is to provide our readers with

ideas that will force their opponents to solve problems over the board, because well-prepared surprises not only increase the chances, but also guarantee more fun!

We are confident that, after getting familiar with the insights from our book, the readers will master the basics of the discussed openings and thus hold all the trump cards in their hands to play solid and interesting games.

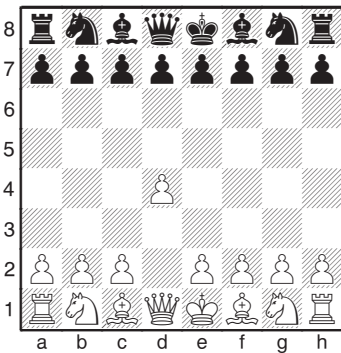
We hope you enjoy our book and wish you entertaining and successful games! If we can help a little to achieve your goals, then our work has paid off.

Introduction

1.d4

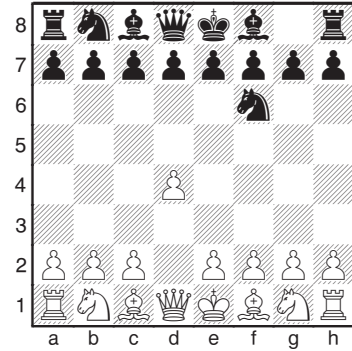
All openings in which White begins with 1.d2–d4 without soon continuing with the move c2–c4 form the group of so-called ‘Queen’s Pawn Games’. They are generally regarded as calm, even if they can sometimes lead to very sharp positions. Since their theory is not yet as extensive as that of the main openings, it also makes them interesting for top players. In today’s tournaments they are also anchored in the repertoire of many grandmasters. A limited amount of effort is required to gain enough theoretical knowledge to safely handle any of the queen’s pawn games.

This overview summarizes the most important Queen’s Pawn Games and shows how the individual chapters are structured.



In the diagram position, the replies 1...♞f6 and 2...d5 can lead to the Queen’s Pawn Games.

I. 1...♞f6



Depending on White’s answer, the game can now lead to a Queen’s Pawn Game, although the question of where the journey will go can still remain open.

A) The currently very popular move 2.♙g5 initiates the **Trompowsky Attack (Chapter 1)**.

B) After 2.♞c3 the classification depends on Black’s reply.

2...d5

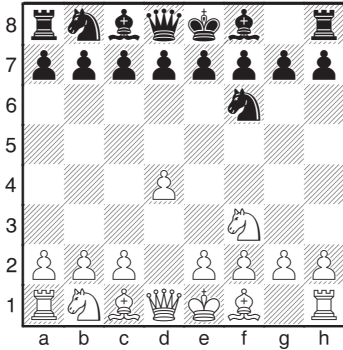
(2...g6 followed by the fianchetto of the bishop on the long diagonal a1–h8 leads to the **Barry Attack (Chapter 2)**.)

The continuation 3.♙g5 is known as the **Richter-Veresov Attack (Chapter 3)**.

C) The development 2.♙f4 at this point is often attributed to the London System. In its classical form, however, this system arises via 1.d4 d5 2.♙f4 etc. Therefore, we treat this opening as the **‘London System without d7–d5’ (Chapter 4)**.

D) By choosing 2.♞f3, White ensures that he maintains the greatest possible flexibility. He can still continue with

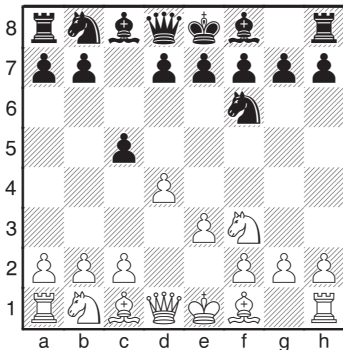
c2-c4 and head for one of the main systems, or later set course for a Queen's Pawn Game.



Here we have to examine the continuations 2...d5, 2...c5, 2...e6 and 2...g6.

D1) For the development with 2...d5 – see II. 1...d5 in the right column.

D2) 2...c5 3.e3



3...e6

(– Another option is the fianchetto 3...b6 4.♘d3 ♘b7.

– And the other fianchetto 3...g6 is also playable – followed by plans according to the pattern 4.♘bd2 ♘g7 5.c3 d6 6.♘d3 0–0 7.0–0 and then ♘b8–c6 or ♘b8–d7.)

4.♘d3 d5

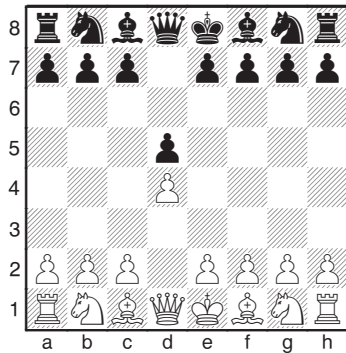
– After 5.c3 the game can develop in the direction of the **Colle System (Chapter 7)**.

– On the other hand, 5.b3 leads to the **Zukertort System (Chapter 8)**.

D3) 2...e6 is covered under 'Torre Attack without d7–d5' (Chapter 5).

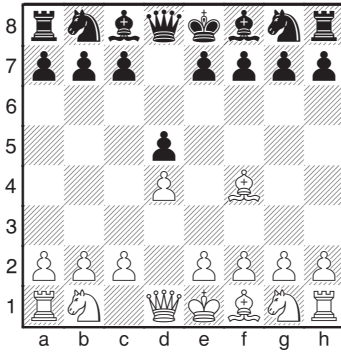
D4) After 2...g6 the continuation 3.♘c3 d5 4.♘f4 ♘g7 transposes to the **Barry Attack (Chapter 2)**.

II. 1...d5



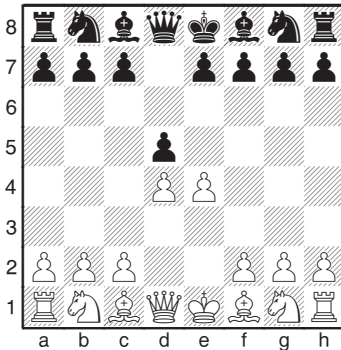
Black responds symmetrically and takes control of the central squares on c4 and e4. At this point White can steer the game in very different directions.

A) 2. ♖f4

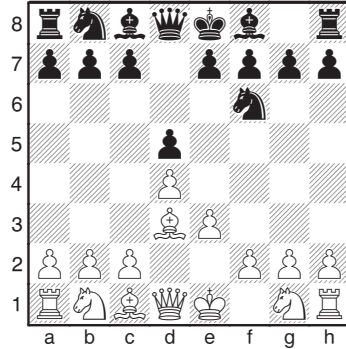


The **London System** is very popular in general tournament play (**Chapter 6**).

B) 2.e4 leads to the **Blackmar-Diemer Gambit**, which has had a very loyal fan base for decades (**Chapter 9**).



C) After 2.e3, it's still unclear whether one of the Queen's Pawn Games will arise and which specific idea will then be pursued. After the universal response 2... ♗f6, White develops the bishop with 3. ♕d3 to prevent the ♗c8 from occupying the diagonal b1–h7. In addition, he retains the option to activate the ♗g1 via e2 without blocking the bishop.



C1) The vigorous push 3...c5 is Black's fastest attempt to fight for the initiative. In addition, the knight can subsequently be developed to c6 without blocking the c-pawn.

After 4.c3 ♖c6, the continuation 5.f4 is by far the most popular. White increases his control of the e5-square before Black can play e7–e5, which would be the case after ♖b1–d2, for example.

5... ♗g4 6. ♗f3

(6. ♗c2 with the intention of responding to 6...e6 by chasing Black's bishop would result in an advantage for Black after 7.h3 ♗h5 8.g4 ♗g6 9. ♗d2 ♗d6.)

After the ♗c8 has been developed, 6...e6 can be played without causing any inconvenience. Now the maneuver 7.h3 ♗h5 8.g4 ♗g6 gives White no advantage, as after the possible continuation 9. ♗e5 ♗xd3 10. ♗xd3 c4 11. ♗e2 ♗e4, Black obviously has an excellent position.

C2) With the quieter but not weaker approach 3...e6 Black can prepare the push c7–c5. White can then launch a stonewall attack with 4.f4 and after

4...c5 5.c3 ♘c6 he can decide which knight he wants to develop first.

6.♘f3

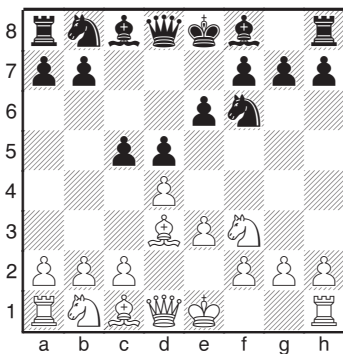
(After 6.♘d2, both sides can concentrate on their development, for example with the natural continuation 6...♗d6 7.♖g3 0-0 8.♘e5 ♘d7 9.0-0 f5 etc.)

After 6...♗e4 Black's primary concern is not the influence of the knight on e4, but the fact that it clears the way for the f-pawn. After 7.0-0 f5 with the possible continuation 8.♘e5 ♘xe5 9.fxе5 ♗d7 10.♘d2 ♗e7 Black has a solid position.

D) After the simple moves 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.e3 ...

(3.♗g5 ♗e4 leads to the 'Torre Attack with d7-d5' – Chapter 11.)

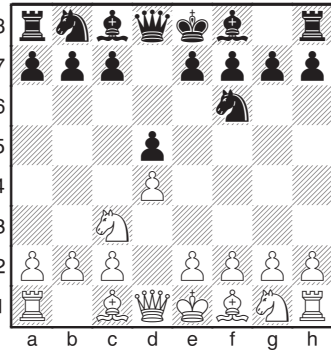
... 3...e6 4.♗d3 c5, White can again choose between two Queen's Pawn Games.



– 5.c3 leads to the **Colle System** (Chapter 7).

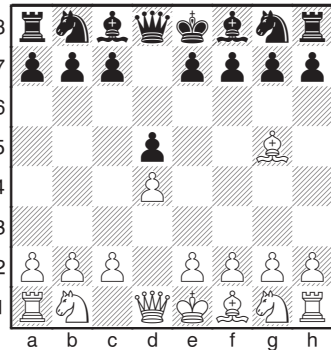
– 5.b3 leads to the **Zukertort System** (Chapter 8).

E) 2.♘c3 ♘f6



And now 3.♗g5 is another move order to reach the initial position of the **Richter-Veresov Attack** (Chapter 3).

F) 2.♗g5

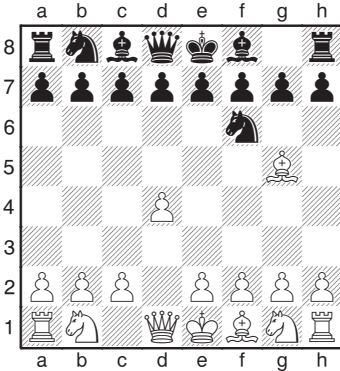


This important alternative leads to the 'Pseudo-Trompowsky Attack', also referred to as the **Hodgson Attack** in some publications (Chapter 10).

Chapter 1

The Trompowsky Attack

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5



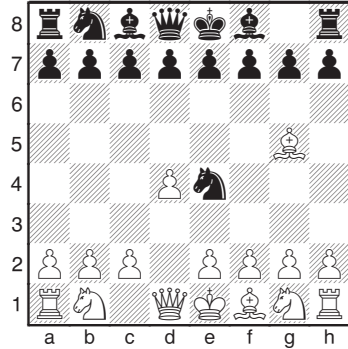
This currently very popular move leads to the Trompowsky Attack. The name goes back to the Brazilian player Octavio S. Trompowsky (1898-1984), who popularized this idea back in the 1930s. Many players use it to avoid the extensive theory of Indian openings. Now White would like to take on f6 and thus weaken Black's pawn structure.

In contrast to the 'Pseudo-Trompowsky Attack' (see **Chapter 10**), Black has not yet moved the d-pawn, but the knight.

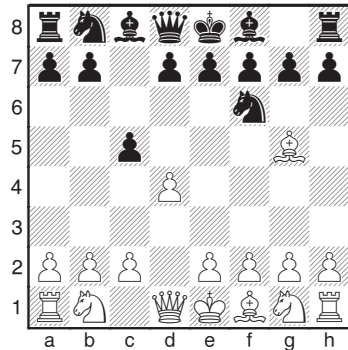
2...♞e4

With this logical reaction, Black initiates the main line. He prevents White from taking on f6 while gaining a tempo by counterattacking the bishop.

However, he can also opt for other continuations, in particular 2...c5, 2...e6 and 2...d5, which we will now take a closer look at.

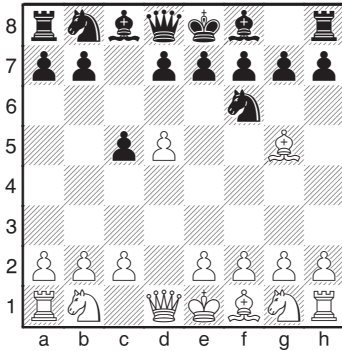


I. The sharp approach 2...c5 is very promising, but has to be handled very carefully. And since an inexperienced player can easily overlook an important detail, the two alternatives mentioned should be more suitable for him.



White mostly replies 3.d5, which is most promising from a statistical point of view. However, the important alternatives 3.♗xf6 and 3.♞c3 also deserve a closer look.

A) 3.d5



A1) Now Black can provoke a quick transition to **Line 1** with 3...♖e4. After 4.♗f4, this transition has taken place (to the line with 4.d5 instead of the main move 4.f3).

A2) After the alternative 3...♗b6, White can play 4.♘c3, offering b2 as a sacrifice, and if the pawn were accepted, his development would be accelerated.

(– After the safety move 4.b3 the reply 4...♘e4! is strong.)

– If White protects the pawn with 4.♗c1, Black could play 4...e6 to steer the game towards the ‘Modern Benoni Defense’; e.g. 5.c4 exd5 6.cxd5 d6 7.♘c3 g6 etc.)

4...♗xb2

(Accepting the sacrifice leads not only to a material advantage, but also to complications. However, Black can also decide to continue his development quietly, for example by choosing 4...d6 with the possible continuation 5.e4 ♗bd7 6.♖b1 g6 7.♘f3 ♗g7 8.♗e2 0–0 etc. This position has been played several times in recent practice and with good results for Black.)

After 5.♗d2 and the retreat 5...♗b6, White has to prove that he has enough dynamic compensation for the invested pawn. With 6.e4 he takes more space in the center, which he even wants to expand with f2–f4. Black needs to slow down White’s forces and speed up his development with either e7–e5 or d7–d6.

6...e5

(After 6...d6 7.f4 Black removes his queen from the line of fire of foreseeable attacks with 7...♗d8. In correspondence chess this retreat is considered the best method. In tournament chess in general, Black sometimes chooses one of the alternatives, although after ♖a1–b1 he is still forced to move the queen.)

With 8.♘f3 White develops the king-side and includes the knight in the positional battle for the push e4–e5. After 8...a6 he prevents the advance b7–b5 with 9.a4.

Since Black’s dark-squared bishop has no prospects on the diagonal a3–f8, the fianchetto solution with 9...g6 imposes itself. After 10.♗c4 ♗g7 11.0–0 0–0 the contours of the forthcoming fight become apparent.

White is better developed and has more space, Black has a material advantage. White can now try to use his dynamic lead to develop an attack and at the same time make Black’s counterplay more difficult. For this purpose a plan with ♖a1–b1 and ♗d1–e1–h4 is recommended. Black needs to complete his development and create counterplay, for example with the approach ♗b8–d7–b6 and ♗c8–g4. It’s impossi-

ble to predict whose strategy will turn out better in the end.)

The natural continuation 7.f4 d6 8.fxe5 dxe5 9.♘f3 ♖bd7 can be followed by the further moves 10.♙c4 ♕d8 11.♖b1 (as after 6...d6). In this line, however, Black's dark-squared bishop can be centralized with 11...♙d6 and after 12.0–0 0–0 the position is difficult to assess. For example, the continuation 13.♙g5 h6 14.♙h4 a6 15.a4 ♕c7 ♗f6–e8, ♘d7–b6 and f7–f5 would result in double-edged play.

B) With 3.♙xf6 White parts with the so-called 'small exchange' (i.e. a bishop for a knight) in order to damage Black's pawn structure. At the same time, he ensures the undisturbed continuation of his development, since the bishop can no longer be attacked.

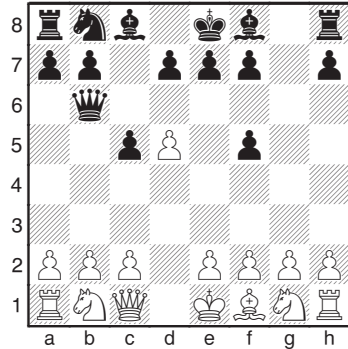
3...gxf6

(After the alternative 3...exf6 and the possible continuation 4.d5 d6 5.e3, Black can develop his king's bishop to e7 or choose the fianchetto with g7–g6, ♙g7. However, some players don't like it if an opposing pawn like the one on d5, which can no longer be attacked with a pawn, sticks like a thorn in their position.)

4.d5

It has already been mentioned that this advance is a standard move after 2...c5. So here too it's the best continuation.

With 4...♕b6 Black brings his queen into play and at the same time forces his opponent to take care of the attacked ♖b2. After 5.♕c1 Black takes control of e4 with 5...f5.



However, the main reason for this move is that it clears the diagonal a1–h8 for the fianchetto of the king's bishop.

B1) 6.e3 ♙g7 7.c3 After White has secured the ♖b2, both sides can concentrate on their further development. It's easy to see that White must first activate his kingside and Black his queenside, for example according to the pattern 7...d6 8.♘e2 ♘d7 9.♘f4 ♘f6 10.♙c4 ♙d7=.

The knight on f4 is placed very well since it's active and cannot be easily chased away. White's forces exert a strong influence on the e6-square. Black's queen's bishop was difficult to bring into play and by putting it on d7, Black has chosen the best option. The outcome is completely open. For example, after 11.0–0 0–0 White can become active on the queenside with 12.a4 and then try to develop play on the e-file. Among other options, Black can try to operate on the g-file by first securing the king in the corner and then moving the rook to g8. He can continue to strive for the central push e7–e5.

B2) The important alternative 6.c4 is even more popular, although it also only

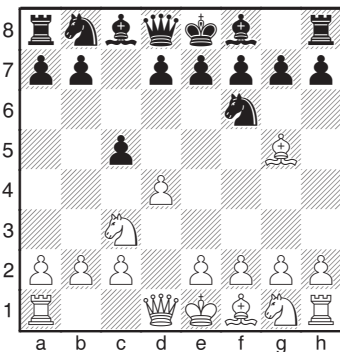
leads to equal play. After 6...♔g7 White is forced to play 7.♖c3 to protect his ♖b2. The move 7...d6 makes ♖b8–d7 possible and sets an anchor for the e5-square.

8.e3 ♖d7 9.♗c2

(The alternative development 9.♖f3 can also be answered with the natural continuation 9...♖f6. After the possible line 10.♔d3 ♖e4 11.♔xe4 fxe4 12.♖d2 f5=, White has nothing to justify claiming an advantage.)

After 9...♖f6 10.♔d3 e5!?, White obviously cannot try to win a pawn with 11.♔xf5??, because after 11...♔xf5 his queen would be overloaded. After 12.♗xf5 ♗xb2+ he could already resign.

C) 3.♖c3



C1) Here we recommend 3...d5!?, since this continuation, in contrast to the alternative 3...cxd4, doesn't allow the early activation of the opposing queen.

White can now play 4.♔xf6 and after 4...gxf6 continue with 5.e3 to pave the way for the queen to h5, from where it targets the weakness on f7.

5...♖c6 6.♗h5

With his last move, Black has increased the pressure on d4, but after the white queen's excursion to the wing, he must first protect his own pawn on d5.

After 6...e6 7.0–0–0 cxd4 8.exd4 Black can prepare long castling with 8...♔d7 and secure roughly equal chances.

C2) 3...cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♖c6 5.♗h4 e6

Although Black allowed the early development of the white queen, he was then able to use it for his purposes by activating his knight with gain of tempo. In addition, taking on f6 would no longer weaken his pawn structure.

After the natural moves 6.0–0–0 ♔e7 7.e4, White has better opportunities for active play. This becomes evident if the opponent activates his queen with 7...♗a5, as after the powerful moves 8.f4 d6 9.♖f3 Black's kingside is already under pressure. And 9...h6 provides little relief, because with the ♖h6 pinned, White can play 10.♗h3, clearing the square on h4 for his bishop.

(For an offensive player – especially against a less experienced opponent – the pawn sacrifice 10.e5 comes into consideration. However, if Black defends well, this approach is very risky. After 10...dxe5 11.fxe5 11.fxe5 ♖xe5 12.♖xe5 ♗xe5 the number of black defenders has been reduced and with further powerful moves, White can maintain the pressure. After 13.♔b5+ ♔f8 14.♔f4 ♗c5, however, his air is getting thinner, and after the possible continuation 13.♔b5+ ♔f8 14.♔f4 ♗c5 it's not clear how he can keep his at-

tack on the road to success. Black has defended the extra pawn and survived the worst.)

After 10...0-0, the bishop is actually threatened.

11.♘h4

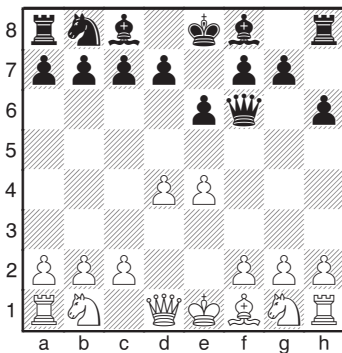
(The piece sacrifice 11.♘xh6 is not for the fainthearted, but that goes for both sides. After the possible continuation 11...gxh6 12.g4 ♖g7 13.g5 hxg5 14.fxg5 ♜h7, a reliable prognosis of further events is impossible.)

After e.g. 11...d5 12.♙xf6 ♙xf6 13.e5 ♙e7 14.♖b1, White has a strong initiative on the kingside and can reinforce the attack with g2–g4.

II. After 2...e6 3.e4 Black can secure the long-term advantage of the bishop pair with 3...h6, because White is forced to play 4.♙xf6.

(4.♘h4? g5 5.♙g3 ♜xe4?)

4...♙xf6



Black now has to reckon with the continuations 5.♘f3, 5.♘c3 and 5.c3 in particular, while 5.e5 is harmless as shown in **Line D** below.

A) After 5.♘f3, a good plan for Black is to activate his knight via d7 and aim for the push c7–c5. The queen’s bishop is developed on the long diagonal a8–h1, while the other bishop supports from behind on the diagonal a3–f8.

After 5...d6 White has to decide how to develop his queen’s knight. If he doesn’t want this to happen via d2, he can now play 6.♘c3.

(With 6.c3 he cements the diagonal a1–h8, but at the time he deprives the knight of its natural square on c3. After 6...♘d7 the further course is open. In the well-known line 7.♙d3 g5 8.0-0 ♙g7 Black can use one of the levers e6–e5 or c7–c5 at a suitable moment to create counterplay, e.g. 9.♘bd2 0-0 10.b4 e5 11.d5 h5 ♞ etc.)

After 6...♘d7, the continuation 7.♙d2 followed by 0-0-0 is clearly White’s number 1 choice. Black mostly counters according to the pattern 7...a6 8.0-0-0 ♙d8 9.h4 b5. The further development is not mapped out. The natural line 10.♙d3 ♙b7 11.♖b1 c5 12.dxc5 ♜xc5 13.♙e3 ♙c7 14.♘d4 0-0-0= serves to give an exemplary picture of the prospects for both sides.

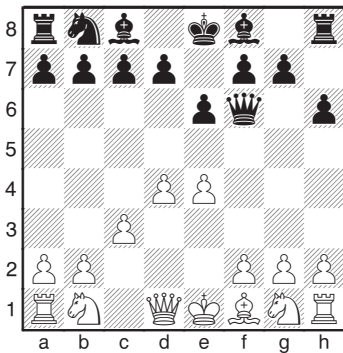
B) 5.♘c3 ♙b4

(An alternative plan to speed up the push e6–e5 starts with 5...d6, accepting that the ♙f8 is blocked. The typical continuation 6.♙d2 c6 7.f4 e5 often leads to an exchange on e5, whereupon the bishop is released again and often moves to b4.)

Before White tackles the bishop with his a-pawn, he plays 6.♙d2 to make sure that ♙b4xc3 doesn’t damage his pawn position. With 6...d6 the pawn participates in the control over e5 and

supports the planned advance e6–e5. In the following phase both sides strive to continue their development and avoid unnecessary conflicts, for example according to the pattern 7.a3 ♖a5 8.♘f3 ♘d7 9.b4 ♖b6 10.♗e2 0–0 11.0–0. After 11...c6 (to secure the squares on b5 and d5) and the rook activation 12.♖fd1 Black can carry out the liberating move 12...e5. With the subsequent maneuver ♖f8–e8 and ♘d7–f8–g6 he reaches equal prospects.

C) With 5.c3 White overprotects the ♔d4 and cements the long diagonal.



By this preparatory measure he avoids being disturbed when striving for a setup with the key moves ♗f1–d3, ♘g1–e2, 0–0 and the additional option f2–f4.

C1) The continuation 5...d5 is considered to be the most significant when it comes to evaluating the whole line. Black tackles his opponent's dominance in the center, after which White can close it with 6.e5.

(After the mostly played 6.♘d2 Black can hold on to his vigorous approach by increasing the pressure on the opponent's center with 6...c5. After the

natural sample line 7.♘gf3 cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♗c5= etc. Black has no trouble securing equal prospects.)

After 6...♗d8 the main alternatives are 7.♘f3, 7.♗d3 and 7.f4, with the standard reply being c7–c5. After 7.♘f3 the game can take the possible course 7...c5 8.dxc5 ♗xc5 9.♗d3 ♘c6 10.0–0 a6= with roughly equal chances. After the opening questions have been answered to a large extent, we would like to take the line a little further to show that after 11.♘bd2 ♗d7 12.♘b3 ♖b6 Black can consider the maneuver ♗d8–b8–a7 with interesting opportunities for both sides.

C2) Although 5...d6 is played most often, we don't recommend this continuation, since practice (not least also in correspondence chess) confirms that it's more difficult for Black to equalize.

6.♗d3 g6

(The important alternative 6...e5!? can either lead to a broader theoretical diversification or possibly just to other lines by a different move order. For example, after 7.♘e2 g6 the continuation 8.0–0 ♗g7 transposes to the line with 6...d6 and 8...e5.)

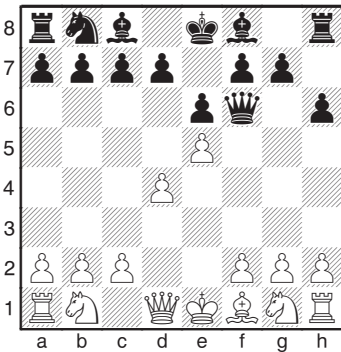
A possible natural continuation would now be 7.♘e2 ♗g7 8.0–0 0–0.

(8...e5 can also be answered with the aggressive push 9.f4, although after 9...♗e7 10.♘d2 0–0 it's unclear who could have the better chances in the long run. The computer doesn't see an advantage for either side, even though the white position looks better.)

After 9.f4 ♗e7 10.♘d2 Black can play 10...e5, transposing to the line just

examined after 8...e5. And the alternative 10...f5 is risky but not without practical chances, as has been shown in an example from correspondence chess.

D) Depending on the perspective, 5.e5 may look promising or dangerous for a less experienced player, although it's actually weaker than the alternatives.



If the queen simply retreats to the initial square with 5...♔d8, the game can take the following course.

6.♘f3 d5

(6...d6!? is also played frequently and with good results.)

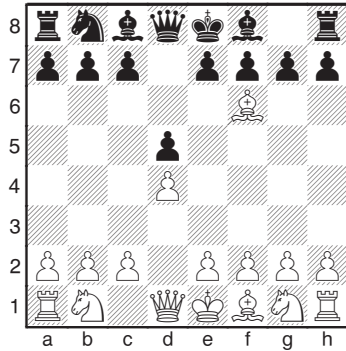
7.c4

(After the alternatives 7.♙d3, 7.c3 or 7.♘bd2, the simple answer 7...c5 leads to good play early on.)

After the now possible line 7...♙b4+ 8.♘bd2 dxc4 9.♙xc4 ♘c6, Black has fully equalized. After 10.0–0 and the continuation 10...♙xd2 11.♙xd2 ♘e7=, it's plausible for White to place the rooks on e1 and d1, while Black can play 0-0 followed by b7–b6 and ♙c8–b7.

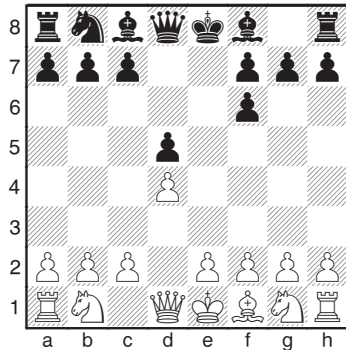
III. Measured by its frequency, 2...d5 is the clear number 2 in correspondence chess, while in direct competition it only ranks under 'side issues'.

3.♙xf6



If Black allows his kingside to be weakened, White gladly accepts the invitation.

A) 3...exf6



If Black recaptures with the e-pawn, he intends to control the center with pieces instead of pawns, although he wants to push the f-pawn with f6-f5-f4.

4.e3
(4.g3 ♙g2 can be answered well with 4...c6 to restrict the fianchetto bishop

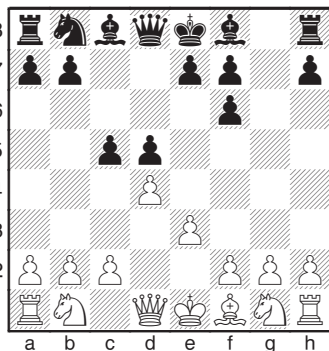
early on. After 5.♔g2, both sides can continue the development with 5...♗d6 6.♘f3 0–0 7.0–0=. Again, we like 7...f5 to strengthen the control over the e4-square. After 8.e3 ♗e6 9.♘bd2 ♘d7= the prospects are roughly equal during the transition to the middlegame.)

After 4...♗d6, Black is ready to castle, for example after the most active option 5.c4 and now 5...dxc4 6.♗xc4 0–0. It's not to be seen how White could obtain an opening advantage. If he continues with 7.♘c3, Black can keep the game under control with the familiar answer 7...f5. After the possible continuation 8.♘f3 ♘d7 9.0–0 ♘f6 10.♖c2 c6=, the position is completely balanced. The black queen finds a good square on e7 and the ♗c8 can be placed on e6. The rooks can be developed to d8 and e8, while the white rooks are best placed on c1 and d1.

B) The alternative capture towards the center with 3...gxf6 leads to the opening of the g-file, which will later be occupied by the rook. Now 4.e3 and 4.c4 are the two most important replies.

B1) 4.e3 is the most common choice over the board and in correspondence chess.

4...c5



This particularly active push at the same time clears the way for the queen towards the queenside and allows ♗b8–c6 without blocking the c-pawn.

B1a) The most popular move 5.dxc5 also belongs to the repertoire of the world champion. If after 5...e6 White chooses a natural move like 6.♘f3, he has little chance of obtaining an advantage since Black can play ♗f8xc5 undisturbed. That's why 6.c4 Δ6...dxc4 7.♖xd8+ is also popular today.

(7.♖c2 ♖a5+ 8.♘d2 c3!?)

Although after 7...♗xd8 8.♗xc4 ♗xc5 Black has lost his castling rights, his queenside is undeveloped and his pawn structure consists of three islands, his chances are no worse than those of his opponent. After e.g. 9.♘c3 ♗e7 it becomes clear that losing the castling rights is not a disadvantage. After the plausible continuation 10.♘f3 b6 11.♗e2 ♗b7 12.♖ac1 ♘d7 13.♖hd1 ♘e5=, the outcome is completely open.

B1b) After 5.c3 the queen can be developed with 5...♖b6 and attacks the ♗b2. After 6.♖b3, we favor Black's decision to keep the game open, as usually happens and as is the case after 6...♘c6.

(However, closing the position with 6...c4 can also be found in practice. We won't go into this any further, but we include a plausible line in order to at least give an impression of the possible further development. In addition, we mention that we have dealt with similar constellations on the queenside in other chapters of this book, which can be consulted here.

7.♖c2 ♘c6 8.♘d2 f5 9.g3 ♗d7 10.♗g2

e6 11. ♖e2 ♜c8 12. 0–0 ♕d6 13. f3 ♗e7
14. e4 0–0)

After 7. ♗d2 e6, we propose the development plan 8. ♗e2 Δ ♗f4. Black can reply 8...f5 to strengthen his control over the e4-square so that White cannot easily include the push e3–e4 in his plans.

After 9. ♗f4 ♕d6 it's in White's hands which way things will go. In particular, he can opt for the continuations 10.g3, 10. ♗h5, 10.dxc5 or 10. ♖xb6. Black can consider doing without castling. Depending on how things go, the e7-square can be a good choice for his king.

White can still postpone castling with 10.g3 to keep all castling options open. After 10...♜g8 the half-open g-file promises attacking chances and after the further moves 11. ♕e2 ♕d7 12. ♗f3 c4= the outcome of the duel is completely open. The position promises an exciting fight to which both players can contribute a lot of creativity.

B2) Against 4.c4 Black has good statistics in correspondence chess, indicating a good chance of a healthy set-up. To achieve this, we recommend the solid continuation 4...c6, which can lead to the natural development 5.e3 e6 6. ♗c3 ♗d7.

The pawn formation on the c-, d- and e-file corresponds to those in different areas of the Semi-Slav Defense, which is known as a strong and belligerent choice for Black. However, the given position is characterized by the doubled pawns on the f-file. We will focus on White's usual continuation 7.cxd5.

(Against the alternatives 7. ♕d3 and 7. ♜c1 Black can keep the balance with natural opening moves.)

In the rare cases where 7...cxd5 8. ♕d3 was played, Black did best with the active answer 8...f5 to increase control over e4. After the natural moves 9. ♗ge2 ♗f6, White has several suitable continuations, which we cannot all examine. The attempt 10. ♖b3 comes from top chess, while one of the computer's suggestions is 10. ♕b5+. Two short sample lines, which should suffice without a special comment, can illustrate how the duel can develop in each case.

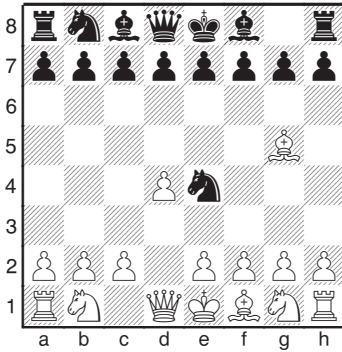
– After 10. ♖b3 a6 11. 0–0–0 ♕d7 12. ♖b1, Black finally creates good counterplay with 12...b5 and after 13.a3 with 13...♜b8↗.

– After 10. ♕b5+ ♕d7 11. ♕xd7+ ♖xd7 12. 0–0 ♕d6= the maneuver ♗e2–c1–d3 etc. is an idea for White, while Black can continue with ♜a8–c8.

Summary: As we mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the main reason for White to choose the Trompowsky Attack is to avoid many of the well-known and deeply elaborated openings. On the other hand, this system can lead to dynamic play with good chances of attacking the opponent's king. For this reason the Trompowsky Attack has attracted more and more fans in recent years and can often be found in today's tournament practice.



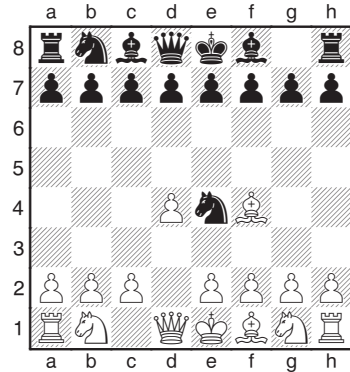
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♙g5 ♘e4



Line 1

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♙g5 ♘e4

The continuation 3.♙f4



At this point, our discussion branches into the following three lines:

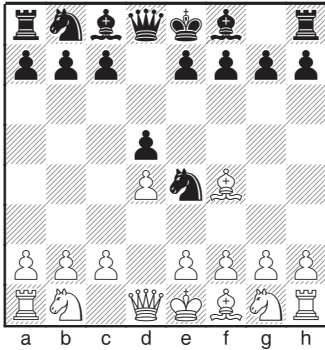
- I. 3.♙f4 (Line 1)
- II. 3.♙h4 (Line 2)
- III. 3.h4!? (Line 3)

The advantage of this move over 3.♙h4 is that the bishop can return to c1, which is helpful in some cases. Therefore, this continuation is more popular in current practice, while the retreat to h4 was more common until about 40 years ago.

3...c5

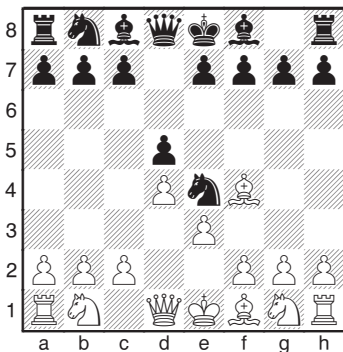
This lever initiates the usual plan: Black attacks the opponent's pawn center to get good piece play. In particular, 3...d5 and 3...d6 should be considered as alternatives.

I. The main goal of 3...d5 is to prevent the white pawn from advancing any further.



However, this move doesn't mean that the lever c7–c5 is removed from Black's agenda, since in many cases it's only postponed. Of course, d7–d5 also reinforces the position of the ♞e4, but that matters less because the knight doesn't have permanent residency there anyway, unless White grants it.

A) 4.e3



White is in no hurry to chase the knight away and instead tries to continue his natural development and possibly forego f2-f3. Now, with a little delay, Black

can choose the bold continuation 4...c5.

(4...♙f5!? is also playable, but we will only give an example line to show the resulting possibilities.)

With 5.f3 White expels the knight in order to continue his development undisturbed. After 5...♞d6, he continues with 6.♞d2 and the option of carrying out the push c2–c4.

After 6...e6 7.c4 dxc4 8.♞xc4 ♞xc4 9.♙xc4, both sides have completed the essential opening tasks and after the further moves 9...♙d6 10.♞e2 0–0 the prospects are almost equal. Black can activate his knight via d7 or c6.)

5.♙d3

(Of course, 5.f3 is also possible. Black should react with the in-between move 5...♙a5+ to bring the queen into play with tempo. This activation is not premature here, because the queen cannot be easily attacked, so Black doesn't have to waste time on its welfare.)

If after 6.c3 ♞f6 White aims for a natural further development with 7.♞d2, Black can release the central tension with 7...cxd4. After 8.exd4 and the quiet continuation 8...♞c6 9.♙d3 g6 10.♞e2 ♙g7 11.0–0 0–0=, both sides have built up comparably effectively and solidly and go into the middle game with equal prospects.)

We now recommend the continuation 5...♞f6, since it delivers the best results from tournament practice.

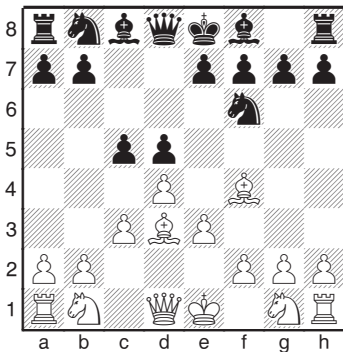
6.c3

(The alternative 6.dxc5 can lead to interesting complications. White plays to keep the pawn, but Black still man-

ages to equalize; e.g. 6...♖c6 7.♗b5 ♖a5+ with very sharp play.

White must not overlook the fact that, in addition to the check, his unprotected bishop is also under attack, so that the reply 8.♘c3 is forced. After 8...a6 9.♗xc6+ bxc6 10.♖d4 e6 11.b4 White's plan of keeping the pawn seems to succeed, but things aren't over yet. After 11...♖a3 and the best reply 12.♘ge2, the continuation 12...a5 is absolutely necessary, but also very much in line with Black's plan.

After 13.b5 ♗xc5 there's not much room for either side to deviate from the line 14.♖a4 ♖xa4 15.♘xa4 ♗b4+ 16.c3 cxb5 and after e.g. 17.♘b6 ♖a6 18.cxb4 ♖xb6= the prospects are equal.)



6...♖c6

After the c-pawn has been moved, the knight can be developed to c6, from where it increases the pressure on the ♖d4 and White's center in general.

(The interesting deviation 6...♖b6!?, which forces White to protect his ♖b2, is more than just an in-between move. After 7.♖c1 the reply 7...♖c6 can follow under different conditions, as Black

has the push e7–e5 in mind. While he has increased the central pressure, the white queen has gone a little astray. A possible continuation is 8.♘d2 cxd4 9.exd4 e5! with excellent play for Black.)

7.♘d2

(7.dxc5? is refuted with 7...e5 8.♗g3 ♗xc5+.)

After the usual further development 7...♗g4 8.♘gf3 e6 9.0–0, Black can consider several continuations. We will focus on 9...a6, an approach that has not been played too often and therefore still has some potential for surprises.

(– The solid alternative 9...♗e7 initiates a further development in the usual ways. For the sake of illustration, we just give the example line 10.♖b3 ♖b6 11.dxc5 ♗xc5 12.h3 ♗h5 13.♖c2 ♗e7 14.♘e5 0–0= etc.

– In correspondence chess 9...♖c8 is often played. However, we don't recommend this continuation for less experienced players because there are easier ways to fight for equality. The main line continues 10.♖a4 ♘d7 11.h3 ♗h5 and here White usually chooses 12.♗e2 or 12.♘e5. It's obvious that Black still has to fight if he wants to reach the middlegame with equal prospects.

– It should also be mentioned that after 9...♗d6 White can pose problems for his opponent with 10.♖b3.)

The move 10.h3 forces Black to decide the future of the ♗g4 and provides the ♗f4 with a retreat square on h2 in case of need. After 10...♗h5 the opponents simply continue their develop-