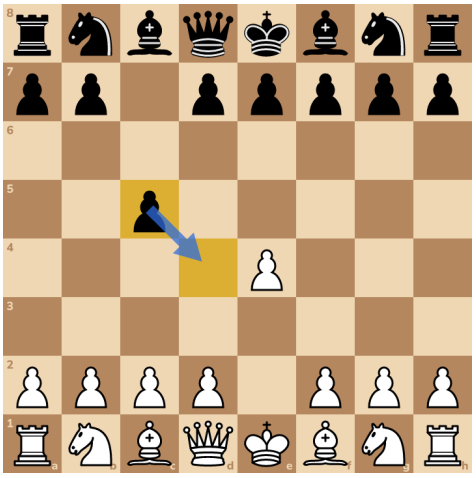
My Chess Family

You play e4, they play c5: the Sicilian for beginners

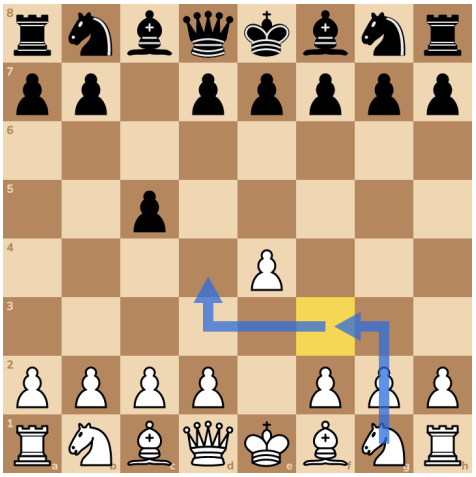
Try each question on a real board, then check the answers at the end of the sheet.

You play e4, they play c5

You played e4. This time Black answered with c5. That pawn isn't in the centre, but it guards d4 from the side.



Here's a good plan for this position. Idea one. Bring out a knight. From f3 it guards d4, so you can push your d-pawn there later.



Black didn't copy you. Black wants to stop you having two pawns side by side, on d4 and e4. A different reply needs different thinking.



Try it 1. Bring your knight out to f3.



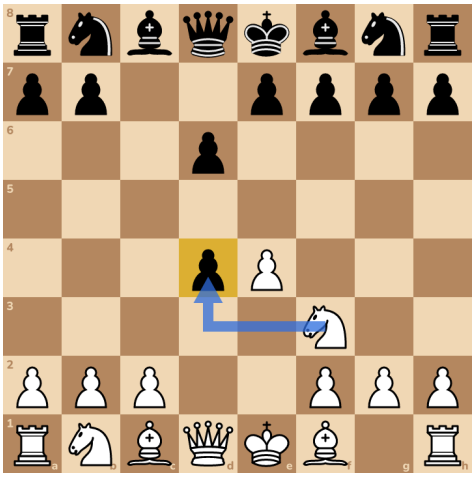
Black pushed d6. That pawn guards e5, and it opens a door for Black's bishop on c8.



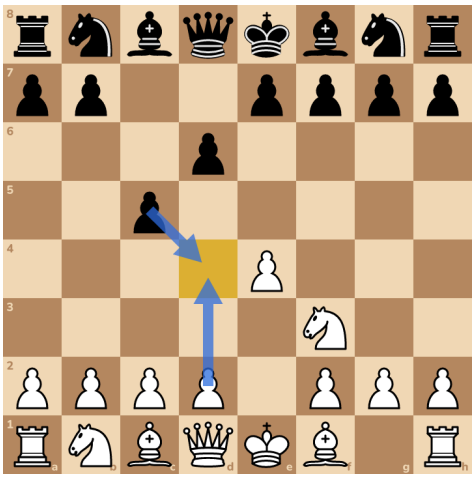
Try it 2. If Black's pawn takes on d4, how many of your pieces can take back?

A: 1 **B: 2** **C: 3**

Black took. Take back with the knight, not the queen. A queen in the centre this early can be chased by Black's knights.



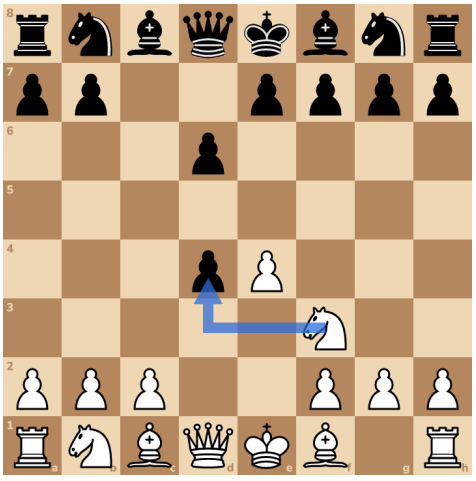
Idea two. Push d4 now. Black's pawn on c5 can take it. That's fine, because you can take back and get a piece into the centre.



Try it 3. Push your d-pawn two squares.



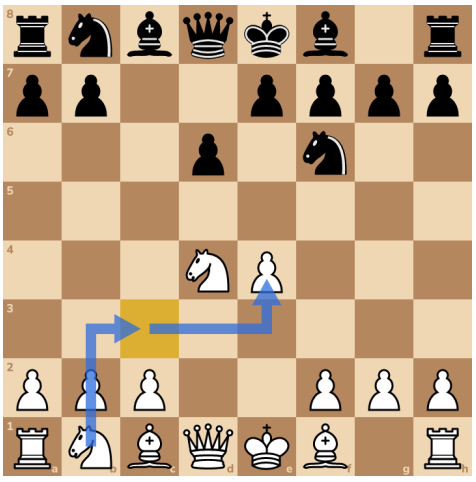
Try it 4. Take back with your knight.



Your knight is in the centre now. But look what Black just did. The knight on f6 attacks your pawn on e4, and nothing guards it.



Try it 5. Guard e4 with your other knight. It comes out and does a job at the same time.



Two knights out. Next a bishop, so your king can castle. On e2 it's tucked in safely.

Try it 6. Bring your bishop to e2.



Look what Black just did! The pawn on e5 attacks your knight on d4.



Try it 7. What should you do?

A: Move the knight **B: Castle first**

Black brought out a bishop, and is ready to castle too. Your turn first.



Well done. Black played c5, so your plan changed. You opened the centre with d4, put a knight there, and moved it when a pawn chased it.



Try it 8. Move your knight back to b3, where pawns can't reach it.



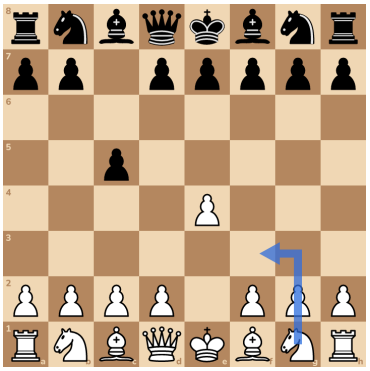
Try it 9. Castle! Move your king two squares towards the rook.



The big ideas stayed the same. A share of the centre, pieces out, king safe. And after every move, ask what the other player just did.

Answers

1. Nf3

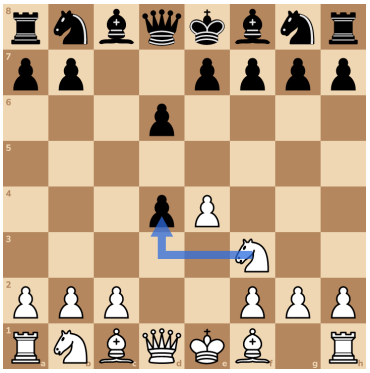


2. B: 2

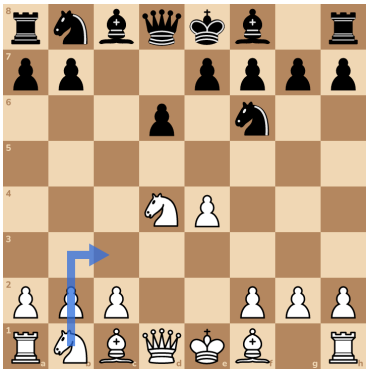
3. d4



4. Nxd4



5. Nc3



6. Be2



7. A: Move the knight

8. Nb3



9. O-O

