
[Welcome!](#) [Advanced Newsletter](#) [Beginners' Newsletter](#)

[Chess problems for beginners](#) [Links](#)

[Contact us/Technical Support](#) [Download Free Manual](#)

Advanced Players Newsletter

Series:

How to Play Effectively with the Black Pieces

Article:


The Advantage of the Second Move?





There is a totally different mindset that is required to play the black side than there is to play the white. The debate over the merits of being the second player is never-ending. Historically, the first move has been preferred as it has always been thought to be advantageous to have the first attacking chance. Hence, *"the Advantage of the first move"*.



In modern times the theory of the black side has become much more sophisticated. The invention and subscription to new schools of thought have allowed for a bit more optimism for the second player. Although, most tournament players would still opt for white in a critical round.


 So, wherein lies the truth? Is it more advantageous to have the first move and launch a quick attack? Or is it just as good to have the second move and let your opponent expose himself to your attack?


 Again, the debate is never-ending. We won't torture ourselves with finding an absolute answer to this age old question but explore solutions to playing a game without the "advantage of the first move".

 Likewise, there is no absolute philosophy when playing black. There is more than one way to approach the battle as the second player. There are two main strategies that we will focus on:

Defense and Counterattack.

1. Defense

 Defense is the art of preventing one's opponent from invading one's position ultimately checkmating the king.

 An opponent can enter via weak squares, an open file, etc. The defender must prevent the acquisition of such weaknesses and/or the exploitation of them.

The Caro-Kann is an example of a defensive system.



1...c6 is a rather passive move for black, but his pawn on c6 is not as exposed as white's on e4. This theme will remain constant throughout the game:

"Black's position will be passive but solid and devoid of easily exploitable weaknesses".

This is classic defensive strategy.

Here is an actual game where black used the Caro-Kann and achieved a most predictable result:

Teichmann, Richard - Nimzowitsch, Aaron

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5



Black's last move questions the unprotected pawn on e4 which must either:


- ☒ be guarded
- ☒ exchanged
- ☒ moved


The game continued:


3.e5 ♞f5 4.♞d3 ♞d3 5.♟d3 e6 6.♞f3 ♟b6 7.O-O ♟b5 8.♟b3 ♟b3 9.ab
♞e7 10.b4

[½:½]

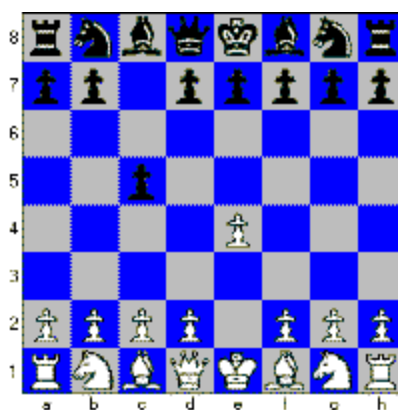
2. Counter Attack

 Counter Attack is the art of fighting for the initiative despite white's plans to utilize his "advantage of the first move."

 A counterattack is launched against the weaknesses that have been created in the position of a sometimes over-eager attacker.

 Subscribers to the hypermodern school of thought believe that black can allow his opponent to establish a broad and dominating center only to expose the weaknesses of it once it begins to be attacked. Advanced pawns leave weak squares behind them. If a counter attacker can successfully break through this formidable wall then his opponents capitulation is usually not far off.

The Sicilian Defense is an example of a counterattacking system.








1....c5 is a fighting move which announces a coming struggle. Black will not be content with passive defense but declares his intentions to fight for his fair share of the center.

"Black will take more risk but will allow himself more opportunities to achieve victory."

This is the essence of counterattack.

Tips for playing aggressive style chess

-  Despite what you might hear from club players and regular tournament players it is absolutely necessary to be able to play good sound aggressive style chess to excel at the higher levels of chess competition. You simply are going to run into too many other players (as you go up) that are as well versed in the basic rules of playing good chess. Fewer and fewer players will make routine blunders and gross positional errors enough for you to have easy wins using basic static chess.
-  First of all, select a couple of good opening systems that give you adequate chances to fight for the initiative. You don't always have to play them but they should be in your repertoire for whenever you need to score the full point. Throughout this course you will become familiar with the ins and outs of many of the good sound aggressive systems to play.
-  Don't shy away from complicated positions. Have faith in your abilities as a chess player. If you play timidly you will find it very difficult to defeat stronger players. Chess is war! Don't go to war unless you're prepared to fight.
-  Look to find aggressive counterstrokes to your opponents threats. Be reluctant to select passive moves as the best solution. Very often they aren't. Good defense is characterized by an understanding of when to launch a sound counterattack.
-  Strive to create imbalances (pawn structure, material, etc.). This will require each player to prepare a unique game plan. This tends to favor the stronger player (by the end of this course you will most often be the stronger player!). We will discuss later how to create imbalances and how to formulate plans based on them.

Illustrative Game

Korzubov , Peter Kasparov, Gary



1.e4 c5

The Sicilian Counterattack!

2. ♖f3 d6 3.d4 cd 4. ♖d4 ♖f6 5. ♖c3 e6 6. ♞e3 a6 7.f4 b5 8.a3 ♞b7 9. ♜f3
♜bd7 10. ♞d3 | c8

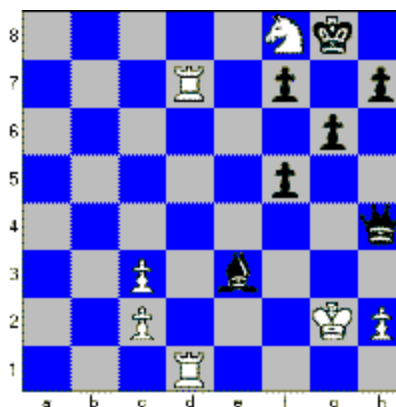


Several features of black's position give him a comfortable game:

-  The two pawns on d6 and e6 (the small center) are very effective in controlling key center squares. They help to restrain whites dangerous center pawns and prevent whites pieces from taking up advanced posts in the center. By exchanging his c-pawn for white's d-pawn black now has the advantage of two center pawns to one.
-  The exchange of pawns has given black good play down the c-file which Kasparov immediately utilizes. Black often uses this file for pressuring white's position with his rooks. Here we will see a common theme used in the Sicilian

by Black:

11.O-O ♞e7 12. | ae1 O-O 13. ♜g3 | c3! 14.bc ♞e4 15. ♞e4 ♞e4 16.f5
 ♞h4 17. ♜d6 ef 18. | d1 ♜e8 19. ♞f4 ♞e7 20. ♜a6 ♞c5 21. ♜b5 ♜a8
 22. | d2 ♜a3 23. ♞b3 ♞e6 24. ♞e3 g6 25. ♜e5 | c8 26. | d7 ♞d8 27. ♞c5
 ♞g5 28. ♞e6 ♞e3 29. ♜h1 ♞h6 30. ♜f6 | f8 31. ♞f8 ♜a2 32. ♜e7 ♜c4
 33. | fd1 ♞e3 34. ♜h4 ♞g2 35. ♜g2 ♜h4



[0:1]



A beautifully played Sicilian game by the ex-world champion Kasparov. We can see clearly how much more fierce the struggle is when black elects to play counterattack instead of defense!

Next week:

Enter the Dragon!

Discover an innovative strategy for playing this well known system as black.

[Welcome!](#) [Advanced Newsletter](#) [Beginners' Newsletter](#)

[Chess problems for beginners](#) [Links](#)

[Contact us/Technical Support](#) [Download Free Manual](#)

Advanced Newsletter

Copyright © 2001 by Chessolutions.com

chessmasters@chessolutions.com