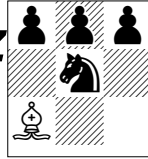
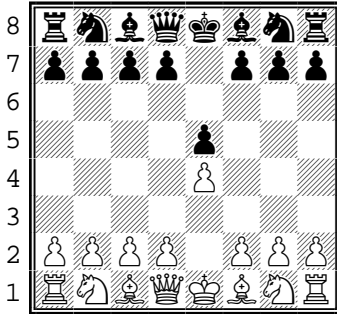


Opening: Ruy Lopez - Main Line -



The Ruy Lopez (named for a 16th century Spanish monk) is popular chess novices and grandmasters alike. It is also known as the 'Spanish game'.

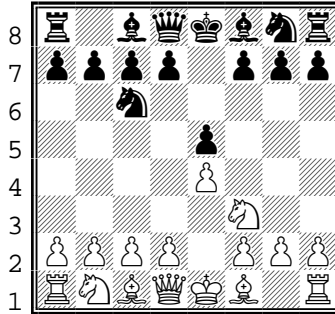
1) e4 e5



a b c d e f g h

A classic beginning for both black and white

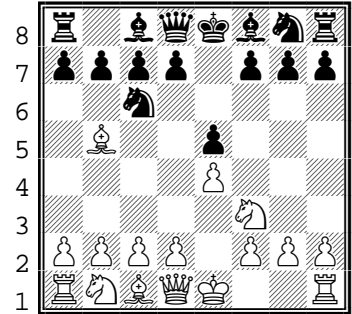
2) Nf3 Nc6



a b c d e f g h

... and continued solid play by both sides

3) Bb5



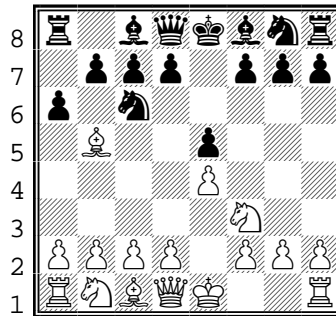
a b c d e f g h

This is the move which distinctly characterizes the Ruy Lopez game

Ideas behind the opening

- White can now castle
- White can continue an attack on queen side
- Pressure on the c6 knight is actually an indirect attack on the e5 pawn.
- There are some effective traps here if black is unfamiliar with this opening.

3) Bb5 a6



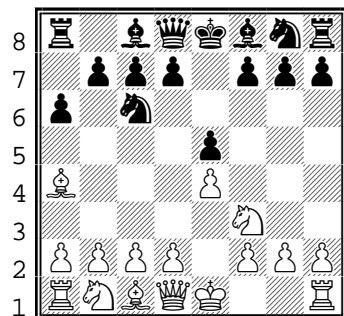
a b c d e f g h

... a popular and natural response

This move is also called the "Morphy Defense", named after Paul Morphy who was one of the greatest chess players of the 1800s.

It is considered a forcing move because white must now make a decision to take or retreat.

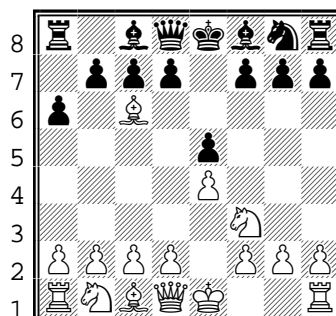
Variation: 4. Ba4



a b c d e f g h

... a popular and natural response

Exchange variation: 4. Bxc6



a b c d e f g h

- The "4. Ba4" variation puts off any captures for just a little while longer.
- The "4. Bxc6" Exchange variation requires black to take the bishop in order to stay even. But should it be bxc6 or dxc6?

In order to truly master the Ruy Lopez, one must understand how to play the Variations, and avoid the traps.