



Chess worksheet: Opening principles

12 puzzles · Levels 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 · answers and explanations at the end

Name _____

Date _____



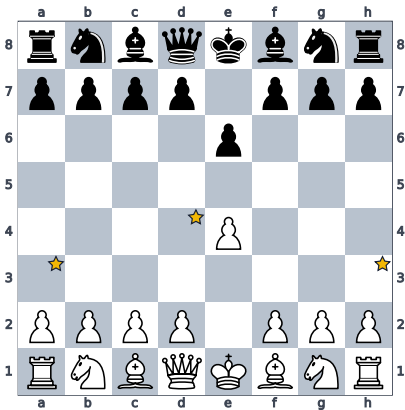
More practice in the Karotto app, with a voice guide and hints. Scan the code or visit playkarotto.com

Write the move (for example $\text{d}f3$ or Nf3) or draw an arrow on the board. The board always faces the side to move.

Yellow square: the piece to move (the "glowing piece" in the question). · Stars: squares you could move to; only one is right. · Letters A, B, C on squares: the options to choose from. · Arrow: the last move, or a move the question gives you. · Red square: a piece under attack. · Blue square: a piece or square to watch.

Level 2

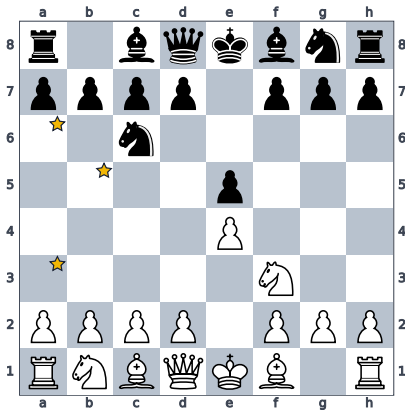
1 White to move



The pawn on e4 is already in the center. Only one star brings another pawn to the middle. Pick it!

Move: _____

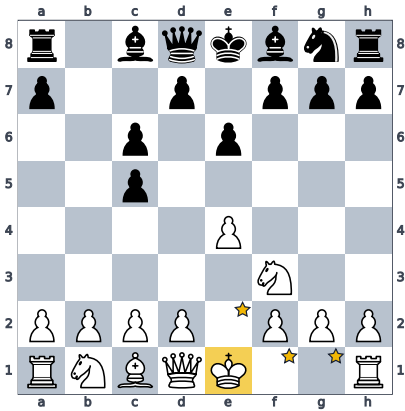
2 White to move



There are three stars; only one brings the bishop out to a good square without being captured. Pick it!

Move: _____

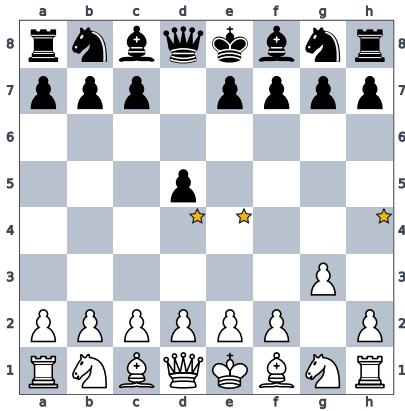
3 White to move



Don't send the king for a walk. Only one star takes the king to safety. Pick it!

Move: _____

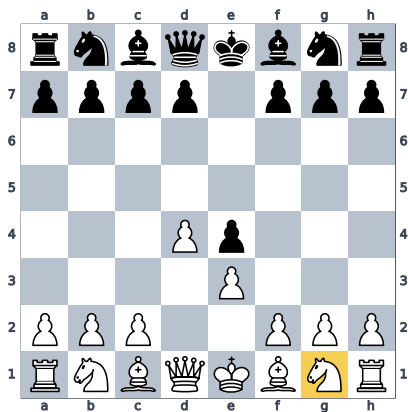
4 White to move



Two stars are in the center, but on one of them the pawn gets captured. Pick the safe star!

Move: _____

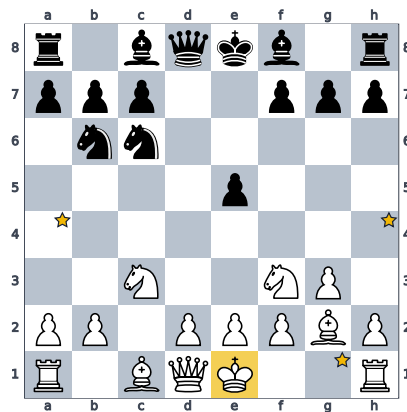
5 White to move



Bring the glowing knight into play. Find a square that isn't on the edge and can't be captured.

Move: _____

6 White to move

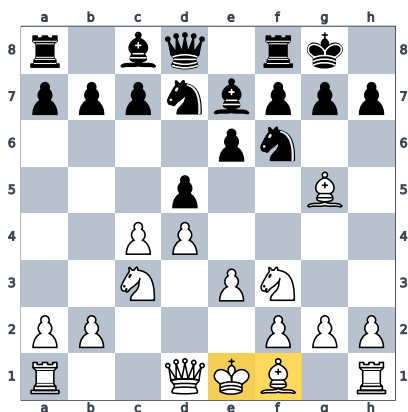


In the opening, don't bring the queen out early, and don't push edge pawns. The king is glowing: only one star is a good move. Pick it!

Move: _____

Level 3

7 White to move

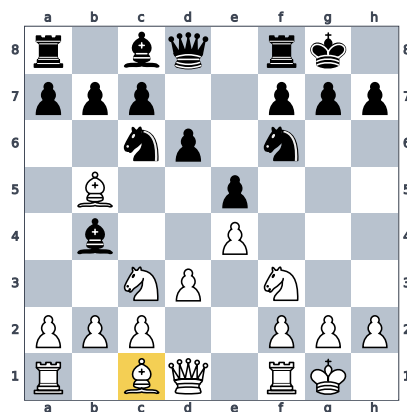


The glowing pieces are still at home. Pick the best move!

- (A) ♖c1 (B) ♔d2 (C) ♘b4

Circle: A B C _____

8 White to move



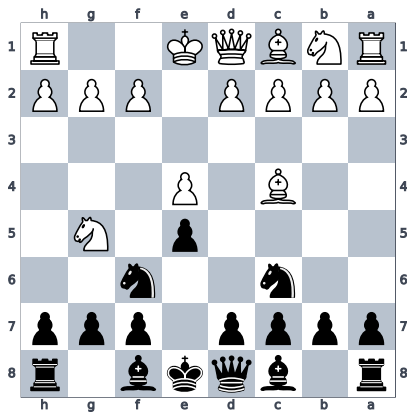
The glowing pieces aren't doing anything yet. Pick a developing move!

- (A) ♘g5 (B) ♘h4 (C) ♔d2

Circle: A B C _____

Level 4

9 Black to move

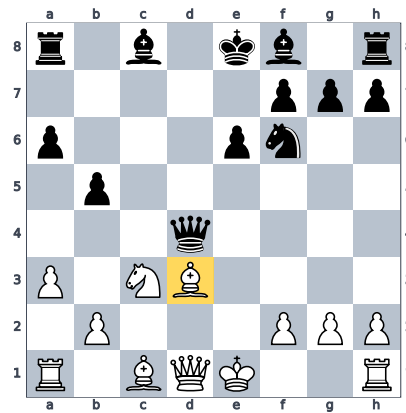


Black to move. The white knight is eyeing f7. Pick the best move!

- (A) ♖xe4 (B) d5 (C) ♜c5

Circle: A B C

10 White to move

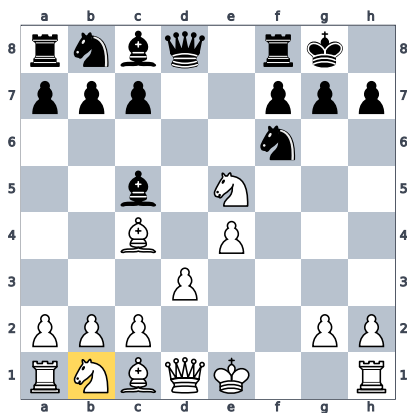


The glowing piece is the bishop on d3. The bishop is standing in the way between the white queen and the black queen.

Move: _____

Level 5

11 White to move



The glowing piece needs to be careful. Which of your pieces is being threatened?

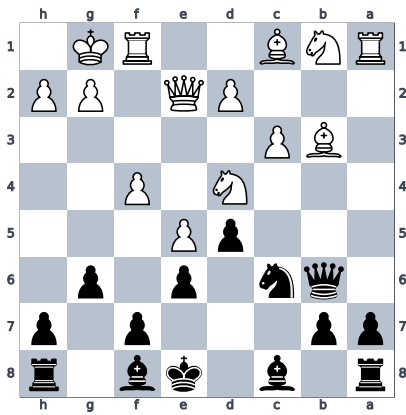
- (A) ♔e2 (B) ♞c3 (C) ♜xf7+

Circle: A B C

Level 6

12

Black to move



The white knight on d4 is blocking the black queen's path.
Of the three moves, which is best?

- ☐ A xe5
 ☐ B xd4
 ☐ C xd4+

Circle: A B C _____

Answers and explanations: Opening principles

1. **d4** · Level 2

Why: Two white pawns both aim at the center.

2. **b5** · Level 2

Why: The bishop is out, aiming at the black knight.

3. **O-O** · Level 2

Why: The king is safe in the corner, and the rook is ready to fight.

4. **d4** · Level 2

Why: The pawn on d4 is in the center and can't be captured.

5. **e2** · Level 2

Why: On f3 the knight would be taken by a black pawn; e2 is safe.

6. **O-O** · Level 2

Why: The king is safe in the corner, and the rook is ready to fight.

7. **A (c1)** · 1. **c1 h6** 2. **b4 c5** · Level 3

Why: Your pieces are coming into the game quickly and safely.

8. **A (g5)** · 1. **g5 xc3** 2. **bxc3 a6** · Level 3

Why: Your pieces are coming into the game quickly and safely.

9. **B (d5)** · 1... **d5** 2. **exd5 a5** 3. **b5+** · Level 4

Why: The pawn moves to d5, blocking the bishop on c4 from reaching f7, and grabs the center.

10. 1. **b5+ axb5** 2. **xd4** · Level 4

Why: The bishop takes the pawn on b5 with check and opens the d-file. Black has to deal with the king, and the white queen takes the black queen.

11. **A (e2)** · 1. **e2 e7** 2. **f3 c6** · Level 5

Why: The queen moves up to e2 to guard the knight on e5 and shield the king. Developing pieces is good, but first you must look at which piece is being threatened.

12. **B (xd4)** · 1... **xd4** 2. **cx d4** **xd4+** 3. **h1 xa1** · Level 6

Why: Trade knights first. Then the queen takes the pawn on d4 with check and takes the rook on a1 too.
