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The Catalan opening is a variation of the Queen's Gambit where the white fianchettoes are the bishop in the clear square. The tee shots can be 1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. g3 The bishop in White's clear square will be a great protector of the king, and will exert influence along the long diagonal. The Catalan opening is often seen as a position opening where white plays for long-term pressure rather than an immediate attack. There are two major variants of the Catalan opening - the Catalan Open, where the black takes the c4 pawn (either with the intention of trying to hang on, or buying some time to free the development of black), and the catalan closed, where the black tries to maintain their bastion on d5 to blunt the white bishop to the light square. Catalan closed A main line of the Catalan closed continues 4... Be7 5. Bg2 0-0 6. 0-0 c6 Both players complete their kingside development, and the black adopts a triangle configuration with their central pawns. Want to take your chess openings TO the basics? Click [HERE](#) to sign up for my FREE week Opening Masterclass Masterclass White can now finally defend their pawn c4 loose with 7. Qc2, which is also preparing a future e2-e4 central pawn break. After 7... Nbd7 8. Nbd2 b6, white can break in the center right away with 9. e4 White has tried slower configurations (such as 9. b3 and then 10. Bb2), but the e4 debut is probably the most ambitious way to exploit Black's passive configuration. White has scored well here in practice, although the black position is very solid. Taking on e4 is a bit risky, and not the most popular movement of black: 9... dxe4?! 10. Nxe4 Bb7 11. Rd1 gives white great positional pressure. White controls the full center, and it's not easy to see how black can break with... c5 or ... E5. If the queen tries to leave the d-file by coming to c7, White is ready to kick away with Bf4! Instead 9... Bb7 is the main movement, allowing the white to advance with 10. e5 if he wishes. After 10... Ne8 11. cxd5 cxd5, we reach the following position: White has a weak but persistent position advantage. 12th Re1 is almost always played here - following Nimzowitsch's principle Overprotection! This decision discourages the liberators ... f6 pawn break, because the e6 pawn would become a target on the file upside down. 4... Bb4 Black has another option in the closed Catalan that I wanted you to make you aware. Instead of the usual 4... Be7, black can play 4... Bb4. After five. Bd2, it wouldn't make much sense for black to trade on d2. After all, why would the black go on a two-movement operation to exchange their o bishop and develop one of the pieces of for them? (5... Bxd2 6. Nxd2 and the c4 pawn is already forbidden) But that's not what black has in mind. The surprising 5... Be7 can be played! At first glance, this manoeuvre seems absurd. Instead of coming to e7 in one movement, black took two movements to get there, get there. Let the white develop a piece along the way! That's true, but the black could claim that the bishop is misplaced on d2. Often the knight will want to come to this place, and for now this bishop also prevents the queen from watching over the d4 pawn. I cover a sample line in the video above. There are pros and cons to inducing Bd2 white, but this maneuver is not as crazy at first glance! Open Catalan Keeping the pawn on d5 is not the only way to manage the Catalan opening. Black can play a start ... dxc4, freeing the center for the coin game. For example, 4... dxc4 5. Bg2 c5: This idea is known from some other lines of Queen Gambit. Black takes c4, then hits the center with ... c5 before the white man finds the pawn. White is likely to recover their material, but in the meantime, black can fight for space and development. Of course, there is a significant drawback. Without the pawn on d5, the bishop in White's clear square has much more power on the long diagonal. The game can continue to 6. 0-0 Nc6 7. It's Qa4. This is a common response from white in the Catalan Open. White threatens the c4 pawn, and Ne5 is also a major threat, accumulating on the poor knight c6. After 7... Bd7 8. Qxc4, black has a nice answer in 8... b5! Taking the pawn would allow an attack discovered against the queen, so white usually refuses to do so. Next round, the black can play ... Rc8. It's a way to reduce the bishop's power to the square of light - to evacuate all the targets in his path! Black will just need to be careful to get their king to safety before the center opens. 5... Nc6 Another open Catalan line is 5... Nc6, intend to meet 6. Qa4 with Bb4 This movement gains a tempo and cuts the white queen to find the c4 pawn. Black can meet 7. Bd2 with 7... No. 5. The position of the black knights might seem a little precarious after 8. Bxb4 Nxb4 9. 0-0, but the black can play 9... Rb8! Black threatens to play ... b5, kicking the queen and stabilizing the c4 pawn. White will usually prevent this with 10. Nc3 or 10. Na3, but then black can play ... a6 to double-down on the idea - an exciting battle is sure to follow! Conclusion The Catalan opening is rich in positional and tactical ideas. Whites approaching slowly may seem unambitious at first, but it can be difficult for black to release its cramped position without making a concession. If you like positional, chess maneuver, the Catalan opening could be good for you! Want to take your chess openings TO the basics? Click [HERE](#) to sign up for my FREE week Opening Masterclass Chess openingCatalan Opening Moves1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3ECO00-E09OriginBarcelona 1929, by Saviolli TartakowerNamed afterCataloniaParentIndian Defence The Catalan is a chess opener where White adopts a combination of Queen Gambit and Reti Opening: White Games d4 and and and fianchettoes the white bishop on g2. A common aperture sequence is 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3, although the aperture may result from various movement orders (see transposition). Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings (ECO) codes E01-E09 are for lines with 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2, and others are part of E00. Black has two main approaches to choose between: in the Catalan Open, he plays ... dxc4 and can either try to hang on to the pawn with... b5 or make it for extra time to release its game. In the closed Catalan, Black does not capture on c4; its game may be a bit cramped for a while, but is pretty solid. Catalan is generally seen as a sure way for White to get a small advantage. This article uses algebraic notation to describe chess movements. History The Catalan takes its name from Catalonia, after the organizers of the Barcelona tournament in 1929 asked Sagielly Tartakower to create a new variation in homage to the history of chess in the region. It had been played a few times before the use of Tartakower in the tournament, however: Réti-Leonhardt, Berlin 1928, for example, transposed into a Catalan Open. The Catalan made his name at the highest level when Garry Kasparov and Viktor Korchnoi both played in their semi-final match in London in 1983: five games of the 11-match match were Catalans. In 2004, Ruben Felgaer won a tournament celebrating the 75th anniversary of Barcelona 1929 and the birth of the Catalan opening, ahead of the Grand Masters (GM) Viktor Korchnoi, Mihail Marin, Lluís Comas and Viktor Moskalenko and the international master Manel Granados. Each match in the tournament, which also took place in Barcelona, started with the movements 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6. With his use by Vladimir Kramnik, the Catalan has gained a lot of attention by the top GMs lately. Kramnik played the opening three times in the 2006 World Chess Championship. The Catalan was also played four times by Viswanathan Anand in the 2010 World Chess Championship; in both cases, the opponent was Veselin Topalov, and in each case White scored two more points than Black. Open Catalan, Classic Line abcdefgh887766554432211Abdefelgh Open Catalan, Classic Line The Catalan Open, Classic Line starts 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 dxc4 5.Nf3 Be7. White swaps the pawn for a lead in development. Without the d5 pawn, the Bishop of White hindered the development of black queenside. The Catalan Open line was a favorite of Anatoly Karпов and Elim Geller as Black and Oleg Romanishin with the white coins. Usually, White retrieves the pawn with Qc2 and a4, Ne5 or Qa4. In order to hold the pawn, Black will have to seriously weaken the With... a6 and ... b5. The ECO code is E05. Example of Kramnik vs. Anand games, Wijk aan Zee 2007 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qc2 a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Bd2 Ra7 11.Rc1 Be4 12.3 12.3 13.e3 Qa8 14.Qd1 Nb8 15.Ba5 Re3 16.a3 Bd6 17.Nbd2 Bd5 18.Qf1 Nbd7 19.b4 e5 20.dxe5 Bxe5 21.Nxe5 Nxe5 22.f3 Nc4 23.Nxc4 Bxc4 20.24 Qf2 Re8 25.e4 c6 26.Rd1 Rd7 27.Rxd7 Nxd7 28.Rd1 Qb7 29.Rd6 f6 30.f4 Re6 31.Rd2 Re7 32.Qd4 Nf6 33.Qd8 Rd7 34.Rxd7 Qxd7 7 35.Qxd7 Nxd7 36.e5 fxe5 37.Bxc6 Nf6 38.Bb7 exf4 39.gxf4 Nd5 40.Kf2 Nx4 41.Ke3 g5 42.Bxa6 Kf7 43.a4 Ke7 44.Bxb5 Bxb5 45.axb5 xd7 46.Ke4 Ne2 47.Bb6 g4 48.Bf2 Nc3 49.Kf5 Nxb5 50.Kyg4 Ke6 51.Kg5 Kf7 52.Kf5 Ke7 53.Be5 1-0[1] Kramnik vs. Kramnik, Carlsen , Dortmund Sparkassen Chess Meeting 2007 1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.d4 Be7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qc2 a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb 7 10.Bd2 Nc6 11.e3 Nb4 12.Bxb4 13.a3 Be7 14.Nbd2 Rc8 15.b4 a5 16.Ne5 Nd5 17.Nb3 axb4 18.Na5 Ba8 19.Nac6 Bxc6 20.Nxc6 Qd7 21.Bxd5 exd5 22.axb4 Rfe8 23.Ra5 Bf8 24.Ne5 Qe6 25.Rxb5 Rb8 26.Rxb8 Rxb8 0 27.Qxc7 Bd6 28.Qa5 Bxb4 29.Rb1 Qd6 30.Qa4 1-0[2] See also List of Chess Openings List named after locations References - Vladimir Kramnik vs. Viswanathan Anand (2007). 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