

The English Opening

Chess

1.c4, and the flexibility it buys.

1.c4 — a flank opening that fights for the centre from a distance, frequently transposing into other openings depending on Black's reply.

MOVE

1.c4

CONTROLS

d5

STYLE

flexible

- Controls d5 without occupying the centre.
- Can transpose into the Queen's Gambit, Réti or King's Indian structures.
- Reversed Sicilian: after 1...e5, it is a Sicilian with colours reversed.
- Popular at the top level for its flexibility.
- Usually leads to slower, strategic play.
- The fianchetto with g3 and Bg2 is the main setup.

LOOK FOR IT

1.c4 e5 gives a Sicilian with an extra tempo for White — the same structures, reversed.

It suits players who prefer manoeuvring to forcing lines, and who like keeping options open.