

The Fianchetto

Chess

Developing a bishop to the long diagonal, and what it costs.

Playing g3 and Bg2 (or b3 and Bb2, or the black equivalents) to place a bishop on the long diagonal, where it can bear down across the whole board.

SQUARES

g2 / b2 / g7 / b7

COST

one tempo

RISK

colour weakness

- Controls the long diagonal, often for the entire game.
- Supports a castled king from an unusual angle.
- Costs a tempo compared to a normal bishop move.
- Creates dark-square weaknesses around the king once traded.
- Central to the King's Indian, Grünfeld, Catalan and English.
- A fianchettoed bishop is very hard to replace.

LOOK FOR IT

Trading a dark-squared fianchetto bishop for a knight often leaves the king permanently draughty.

Think hard before trading a fianchettoed bishop. The squares it defended cannot be covered by anything else.