

Study Brief: 2000+

What this stage is about

By this level, the gains aren't about learning new ideas — they're about completeness, flexibility, and surprise value. A full, both-colours repertoire that covers the mainstream openings you'll actually face, plus a bank of sound sidelines you can bring out when you want to avoid your opponent's preparation, matters more now than adding entirely new systems.

Weekly plan

- **1–2 sessions on Tactics/Tactic or Not**, on the hardest pools, mostly for upkeep rather than new learning.
- **2–3 sessions rotating through the sidelines and flank systems below**, rather than only your main repertoire — the goal is breadth and transpositional understanding, not depth in any one of them.
- **1 session on Woodpecker Method**, hardest pools, timed.
- **1 session of serious My Games review**, every week without exception, using the move-explanation engine, the Elo sweep, and your own Maia-3 style estimate to see where your play actually diverges from strong human play.
- **Spar against Maia** at the 2000–2400 preset for genuinely realistic resistance.

Recommended packs

Surprise weapons and flexible systems as White:

- King's Gambit, Vienna Game, Bishop's Opening, and Scotch Game — all worth having ready as genuine alternatives to your main 1.e4 repertoire, not just curiosities.
- Smith-Morra Gambit — a sound, sharp way to meet the Sicilian that most opponents at this level will have seen far less preparation against than your usual anti-Sicilian.
- Larsen's Opening, Bird's Opening, and Réti Opening — flank systems worth knowing well enough to use as genuine first-move surprises.
- Colle System, Torre Attack, Trompowsky Attack, and Veresov Opening — your full set of plan-based 1.d4/1.Nf3 systems, useful for steering into territory your opponent hasn't deeply prepared.
- Catalan Opening — make sure this is at full depth, both as a main weapon and as something you can defend against as Black.

Surprise and specialist defences as Black:

- Alekhine Defence, Modern Defence, and Pirc Defence — all genuine, respectable tries against 1.e4 beyond your main defence, each with a real plan rather than just being "different."

- The full Dutch family — Leningrad Dutch, Stonewall Dutch, Classical Dutch, and the Ilyin-Zhenevsky Variation — worth knowing as a complete alternative to your main 1.d4 defence, since the four give you genuinely different structures to choose between depending on what suits the position.

Keep your main lines current:

- Whichever Sicilian, Nimzo/King's Indian/Queen's Indian/Grünfeld complex, Ruy Lopez, and Italian Game you settled on in the 1500–2000 brief should stay your primary study — everything above is supplementary depth and breadth, not a replacement for it.

Which Train modes to lean on

At this level the app's job shifts from teaching you new ideas to keeping your existing strength sharp and giving you an honest mirror. My Games, with the full move-explanation and Elo-sweep tools switched on, is the single most valuable session in your week — it's the only mode that's actually studying your own play rather than a fixed pool of positions. Maia sparring at the higher presets is the closest thing to a realistic practice game the app offers; use it accordingly.

Where this goes from here

There isn't a "next brief" above this one. From here, the honest answer is that the app's packs and training modes have taken you about as far as a structured curriculum reasonably can — the remaining gains come from playing serious games, studying master games in depth, and the kind of position-specific work no fixed syllabus can anticipate for you.