



COLUMNISTS

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## Customizing Your IDEa Tree Configuration

The IDEa tree configuration defines the information that is displayed in the tree window of an IDEa project. The default display looks as shown in the image.

Move	Eval	N	Master	IA
→ 38...b6	-2.13	10663	-1.91	-0.85
38...♖e8	-1.65	5979	-1.65	-0.48
38...♗d8	-1.55	3499	-1.55	-0.68
38...♜h7	-0.89	3409	-0.89	-0.41
38...♗xf5	-0.22	12	-0.22	-0.41

The default IDEa tree window

The following information is displayed for each move in the leftmost column:

- *Eval*: The current IDEa score.
- *N*: The number of analyzed positions in this branch of the IDEa tree.
- *Master*: The score stored in the master tree (if you use one). For information about master trees, see [IDEa Master Trees and IDEa Game Links](#).
- *IA*: Engine evaluation of the position. The evaluation is taken from the infinite analysis history, which is accessible from the status bar.

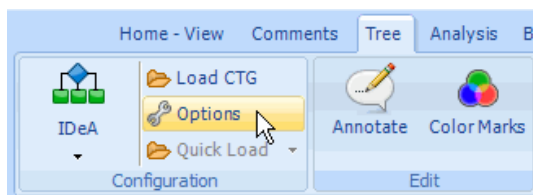
In the screen-shot above, you can see that the chess engine found 38...b6 to be the best move with an evaluation of -0.85 (see the IA column). After running IDEa for some time, the analysis tree was exported to the master tree and at that time IDEa's score for 38...b6 was -1.91 (see the Master column). Since then, IDEa has continued analyzing and the current score is -2.13 (see the Eval column) and that branch contains over ten thousand positions. Comparing these columns gives you useful information; for instance, both about the current status and the progress you are making.

If you want to know more about the evaluations in the IA column, you can hover with the mouse pointer over the IA history field in the status bar to display additional information.

The default IDEa tree configuration is just a starting point, which the serious analyst can customize to his needs.

### Standard Hidden Columns

In addition to the columns described above, the IDEa tree configuration actually contains three more columns that are hidden by default. If you haven't already done so, switch to the IDEa tree configuration (You can do this while viewing the Sandbox or a database game). After that, select the Tree tab and click Options as shown here.



Bring up the IDEa tree configuration

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Note that the label on the leftmost button shows that the IDeA tree configuration is displayed in the tree window.

The tree configuration window will be brought up.

Click here for the [Flash version](#) or here to download and install the [Full version](#). Or play online against [Rybka](#).



The default IDeA tree configuration

The three hidden columns are as follows:

- *Total*: The total number of games in HugeBase where the selected move was played.
- *Success*: The percentage score of the move in HugeBase. It is calculated from the point of view of the side to move.
- *CAP*: The CAP database contains tens of millions of positions evaluated by a chess engine. This column shows the evaluation of the moves in the tree window.

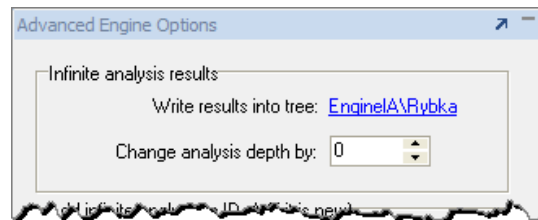
If you want to display these columns in the tree window, simply select them by clicking the corresponding check boxes in the Visible column highlighted in the image above.

Of course you can also hide a column by clearing its "Visible" check box.

### Adding Engine Analysis Columns

Now that infinite analysis and IDeA have practically been merged into a single analysis tool, it can be quite useful to see the infinite analysis evaluations of your favorite chess engines in the IDeA tree configuration.

You can choose an infinite analysis tree for each engine. A new window, Advanced Engine Options, has been added to Engines mode. Switch to Engines mode. If you do not see this new window, you can enable it with the Layout menu at the bottom of the sidebar. After that, select one of the installed engines in the Engines list. The Advanced Engine Options will display the current settings of the engine.



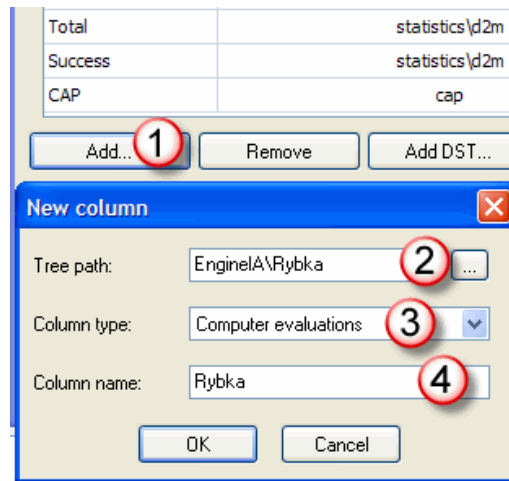
Choose analysis tree and depth adjustment

Here you see the "Infinite analysis results" pane of the Advanced Engine Options. It shows the options for the selected engine, in this case Rybka. I store all the engine specific infinite analysis trees in a special subdirectory, EngineIA, within the ATrees directory and in this case the analysis will be written to a tree called Rybka.

You should repeat this for other engines that you use for analysis so that the analysis of different engines are stored in different trees. The next step is to add the engine analysis trees to your IDeA tree configuration.

Make sure that the IDeA tree configuration is selected and then open the

"Tree configurations" dialog box, as was described above.



Add an engine analysis column

This example shows how I add a new column with Rybka analysis to the IDeA tree configuration:

1. Click the Add button in the "Tree configurations" dialog box. The "New column" form will be brought up.
2. Click the button on the right hand side of "Tree path" and locate the tree where the Rybka analysis is stored. This should be the same tree as you specified in the "Advanced Engine Options" described above. In this example the tree is "EnginelA\Rybka." This means that the tree is stored in the EningeIA subdirectory of ATrees and the name of the tree is Rybka, which consists of two files, Rybka.hsh and Rybka.elm.
3. The "Column type" is by default set to "Computer evaluations," which is exactly what we want here.
4. Finally, modify the "Column name" by editing the text in the field. This is the text that will be displayed in the column heading of the tree window. I like to keep it short and usually shorten the engine name to three or four characters. That way it is easier to fit more columns into the tree window.

These steps should be repeated for other engine analysis trees that you want to display in the IDeA tree configuration.

The following screen-shot shows a modified IDeA tree configuration where I have added columns for Rybka, Houdini, Critter, Komodo, and Stockfish, so I can compare their evaluations at a glance.

Move	flg	ILeA	N	Master	IA	Ryb	Hou	Cri	Kom	Sto				
26. Nxf1		0.83	6666		0.83	17								
26. a4		-0.93	21021	-0.68					-0.76	26				
26. b1		-0.93	8521	-0.68	-0.52	25				-0.72	27			
26. h1		0.93	7870		0.76	17	0.83	10	0.76	14				
26. f1		-0.93	7457		-0.56	13								
26. c1		-0.93	5725	-0.93	-0.44	18			-0.85	19	-0.97	25		
26. b3		0.98	14080		0.83	17								
26. Nxf5		-1.02	17329	-0.64	-0.52	26	-0.76	19	-0.66	22	-0.72	23	-0.76	13

IDeA tree configuration with engine evaluations

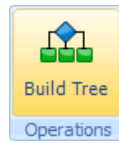
The engine analysis columns show the evaluation and the corresponding depth. The deepest calculation is shown in bold. As an example, we can see that Rybka was run until it reached depth 19 when it considered 26.Nxf5 to be the best move with an evaluation of -0.76. Komodo had the same evaluation at depth 26, but favored 26.a4 instead of 26.Nxf5.

### Different Types of Games

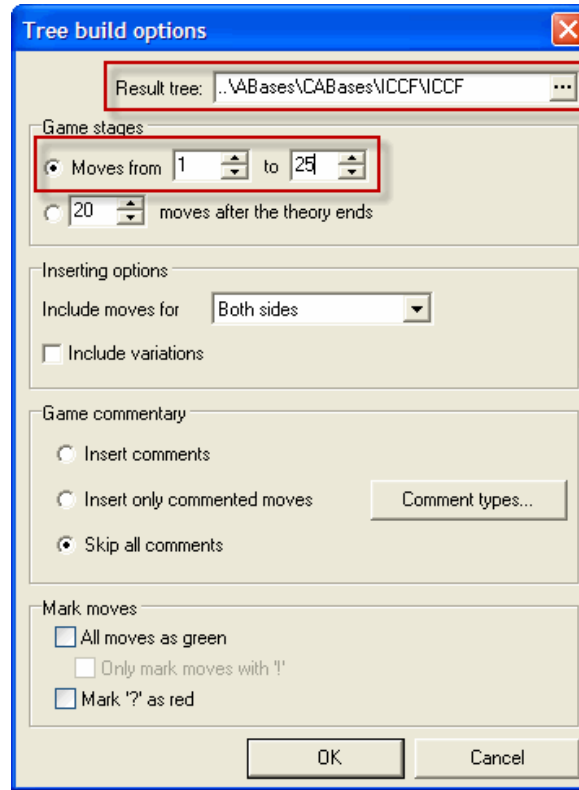
There exist databases for different types of games: OTB games (e.g., HugeBase), correspondence games (e.g., corr2011), and chess engine games. Many players like to view and compare the opening statistics for those different categories of games. Others may be interested in statistics for some other database of games.

Viewing the statistics for HugeBase is easy. The columns are already defined in the standard IDeA tree configuration and you only have to unhide them, as was described above.

If you want to view the statistics for some other database, you may need to start by building a tree for the database. Let's say that I want to build a tree for a database called ICCF. I start by opening the database and while viewing the game list, I switch to the Tree tab and click Build Tree.



The "Tree build options" dialog box will be displayed.

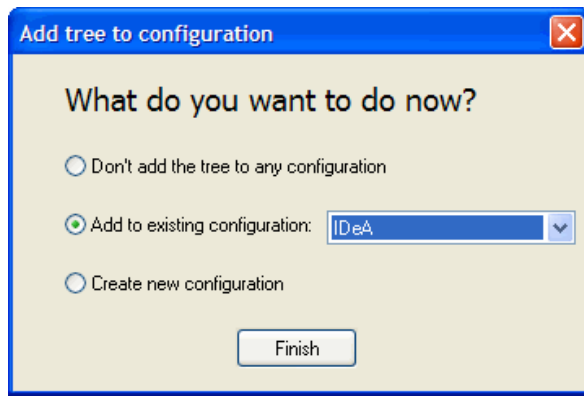


Building a statistics tree for a database

I only modified two fields:

- *Result tree* is the tree that will be built from the database. I called it "ICCF," just like the database itself and I place it in the same directory as the database. This will produce two new files, ICCF.hsh and ICCF.elm. Make sure that the tree you are creating doesn't already exist. Otherwise the statistics will be updated instead of starting from scratch.
- *Moves from* defines the move range from the games in the database that will be included in the tree. I wanted to include the first twenty-five moves. You may want to choose a different number here, depending on what you will be using the tree for.

I left the rest of the fields unchanged. When I click OK, the tree will be built and after that I am asked if I want to add it to a tree configuration.



Adding the tree to the IDeA tree configuration

Here I selected "Add to existing configuration" and then picked IDeA from the drop-down list. When I click Finish, two new columns will be added to the IDeA tree configuration. You may want to modify the default column headings ("N" and "%") to reflect to which database they refer. In order to do that you must open the "Tree configurations" window, as described above.

Name	Tree	Visible	Quick
N	*idea	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Master	*master	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IA	infinite_analysis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total	statistics\d2m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Success	statistics\d2m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CAP	cap	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
N-ICCF	..\ABases\CABases\ICCF\ICCF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
%	..\ABases\CABases\ICCF\ICCF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Modifying column headings and column placement

Here you can double-click in the "Name" column to change a column heading. After selecting a column (by clicking its name), you can move it around with the blue arrow buttons on the right-hand side of the window.

When you are finished, your IDeA configuration will look something like this when it is displayed in the tree window:

Move	flg	IDeA	N	IA	N-ICCF	%
→ 13. de2	<input type="checkbox"/>	+0.48	89468	+0.33   20	35	76%
→ 13. b3	<input type="checkbox"/>	+0.44	1094	+0.11   14	23	54%
→ 13. ce2	<input type="checkbox"/>	+0.29	188	+0.29   18		
13. d3	<input type="checkbox"/>	+0.22	16	+0.33   18		
13. e3	<input type="checkbox"/>	+0.11	150	+0.22   18	14	54%
13. f2	<input type="checkbox"/>	+0.04	20	+0.26   18		
13. a4	<input type="checkbox"/>	-0.52		-0.52   15		

Database statistics added to the IDeA configuration

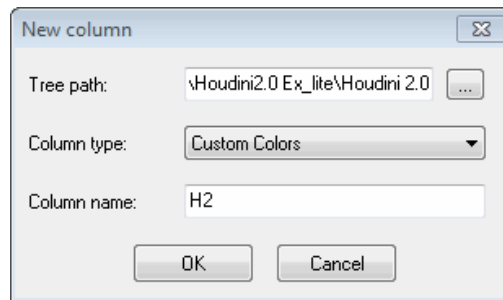
You can repeat these steps for other databases.

### Adding Aquarium Book Colors

There are some high-quality opening books available in Aquarium book format. These include Jeroen Noomen's Rybka 3 book, Jiri Dufek's Rybka 4 book and the Houdini 2 opening book. The move colors of these books can be displayed in the IDeA tree configuration.

Let's take the Houdini 2 opening book as an example (this assumes that you have installed the book). Start by opening the "Tree configurations" dialog box and then click "Add" to add a new column as described above.

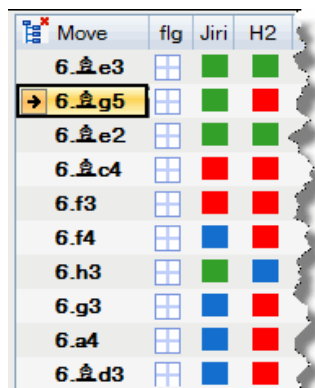
Click the ellipses button to the right of the "Tree path" field and locate and select "Houdini 2.0.hsh."



Select the "Custom Colors" column type

Next you should change "Column type" to "Custom Colors," as shown in the image above. Finally, you should enter the column heading ("Column name"). I have selected "H2" to identify the column with the move colors from the Houdini 2 opening book. After clicking OK, you can move the column with the blue arrow buttons as previously described.

The following screen-shot shows the first few columns of an IDeA tree configuration with colors from two Aquarium opening books: Jiri Dufek's Rybka 4 book ("Jiri") and the Houdini 2 opening book ("H2").

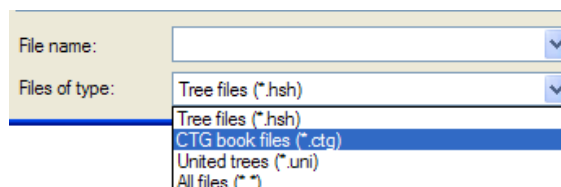


Colors from two Aquarium books

### Adding CTG Opening Book Colors

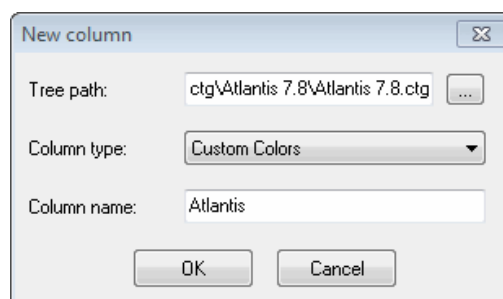
There are many opening books available in CTG format. These can also be added to the IDeA tree configuration so that you can see the move colors in the opening stage of the game.

Start by opening the "Tree configurations" dialog box and then click "Add" to add a new column as described above.



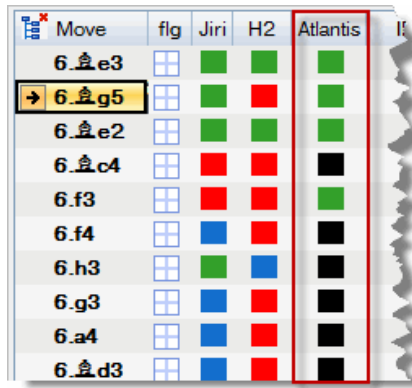
Adding CTG colors to IDeA configuration

Since we are going to add a CTG tree, we must change the "Files of type" field to "CTG book files (\*.ctg)," as shown here. After that browse to locate the tree that you want to add.



Select the "Custom Colors" column type

When you have selected the tree you should change "Column type" to "Custom Colors." You may also want to change "Column name." After clicking OK, you can move the column with the blue arrow buttons, as previously described. After that, you should see something like this in the tree window:



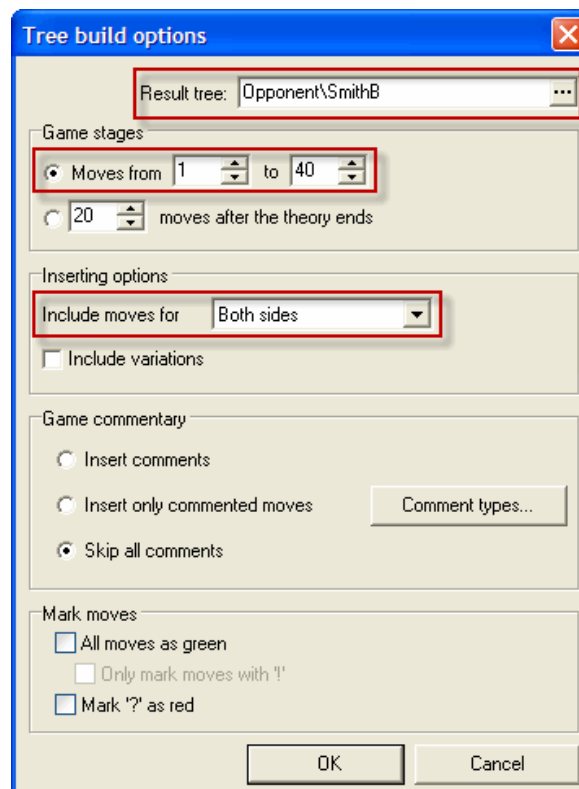
Move colors from a CTG book in IDeA

The new column, "Atlantis," with the CTG book colors is highlighted.

You can add as many CTG and Aquarium books as you like to the IDeA tree configuration. It can be very useful when you are analyzing the openings.

### Preparing For an Opponent

When you are preparing for an opponent (or playing a correspondence game), you can keep track of his opening repertoire in the IDeA tree configuration. Let's say that you have the white pieces. You need to start by collecting all available games where your opponent had black. This can be as easy as searching HugeBase, but in other cases you may also need to search correspondence chess databases, etc. Once you have a list of your opponent's games in Aquarium (i.e., games where he plays black), you need to build a tree from those games. With the game list displayed, switch to the Tree tab and click Build Tree, as was described earlier. The "Tree build options" will be shown.



*Result tree.* I store the trees of my opponents' games in ATrees\Opponent. I choose the name of the tree based on my opponent's name and then attach a "B" or "W" to the tree name to indicate for which color I built the tree. In this example, the name of the tree is "SmithB," indicating that the statistics in this tree cover games where my opponent ("Smith") had the black ("B") pieces.

*Moves from.* With a few thousand games at most, you can choose any move range you like and the tree will be built in just a few seconds. In this case I build a tree from the first forty moves of each game, which should be enough to cover even the variations with the longest theory!

*Include moves for.* I chose to see the moves of both sides, both my opponent's moves and those who have played white against him. I could have set this option to "Black," but I like to see both sides.

I left all other options at their default values. When the tree has been built "Add tree to configuration" is displayed, where you select "Add tree to existing configuration" and then you pick "IDeA" from the drop-down list, like we did when adding the database statistics above. You may also want to modify the column headings, as we did there. After you have done that, the new columns, showing your opponent's move choices and success will look something like this:

Move	fig	IDeA	N	M	P	SmithB	%
1...e6		+0.15	1		15		
1...e5					15		
→ 1...c5					15	76	59%
1...Nc6					5		
1...a6					6		
1...c6					26	2	75%

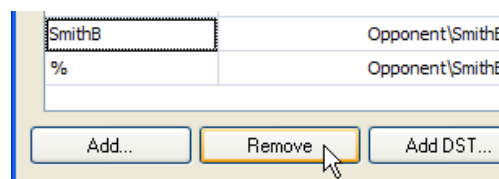
Your opponent likes the Sicilian Defense!

Here you can immediately see that your opponent almost invariably plays the Sicilian Defense when confronted with 1.e4 (76 games, 59% score). You can dig deeper into the tree and see that he likes the Najdorf variation. Going even further, you will find a suitable point to start your analysis while still having access to your opponent's moves in that position. As your IDeA analysis progresses you may be able to spot some weaknesses in your opponent's play. You might also discover that he likes to head for well-known drawing variations, in which case you may want to find an early deviation that avoids those variations.

While analyzing the opening and choosing the variation to play against your opponent, seeing his move choices and score will help you focus your analysis on those positions that matter most and are most likely to come up in your game.

### Removing Columns

Once you start adding columns to your IDeA configuration, you will probably also want to remove columns that are no longer of use, such as columns added for a specific opponent or correspondence games.



Remove a column from the configuration

With the IDeA tree configuration displayed in the tree window, switch to the Tree tab (available while viewing the Sandbox or a database game). Click the Options button to bring up the "Tree configuration" window and select the column that you want to remove. In the image above I have selected the

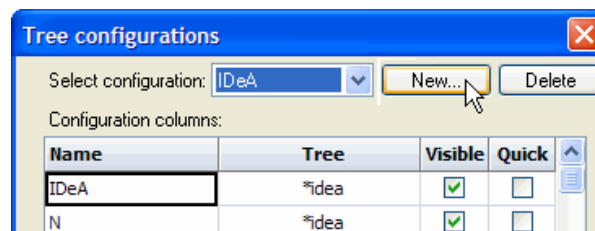
column that we added above, "SmithB." When I click the Remove button, it will be deleted from the configuration. Next I would click the corresponding "%" column and delete it too.

### Creating a New IDeA Tree Configuration

When you are analyzing a position from the opening or early middlegame, it may be useful to have the IDeA configuration display colors from several opening books, statistics for your opponent, etc. However, these columns have no useful information in later stages of the game and just take up valuable space.

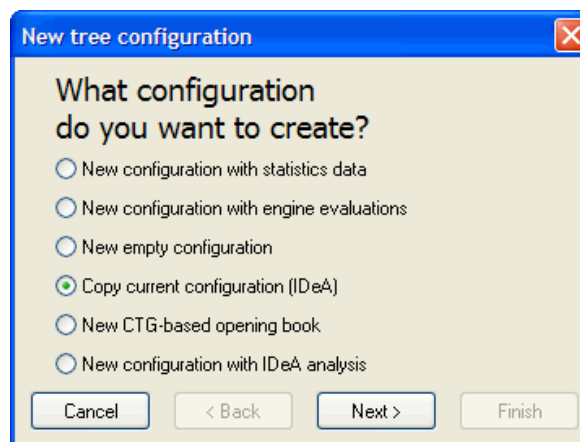
Of course you can hide or remove columns that are no longer useful, but when you need them again they must be added again, etc. This can become inconvenient when you are analyzing several games, some in the opening stage, some middlegame, and endgame positions. Fortunately, there is an easier and more elegant way to deal with this situation.

Although Aquarium comes with a standard IDeA configuration, we have seen that you can easily modify and adapt that configuration to your needs. You can also create a new IDeA tree configuration. Start by opening the "Tree configurations" dialog box, as described above.



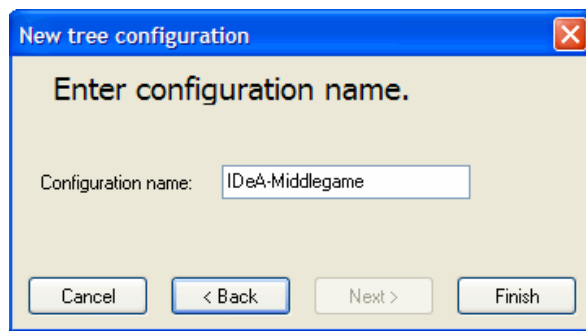
Creating a new IDeA configuration

Make sure that the IDeA configuration is displayed in the "Select configuration" field and then click the New button. The "New tree configuration" wizard will be opened.



The New tree configuration wizard

"Copy current configuration (IDeA)" is selected by default, so you can just click the Next button. Now you are asked to give the new configuration a name.



The name of the new IDeA configuration

In this example, I call the configuration "IDeA-Middlegame," indicating its purpose. I am going to use it for analyzing middlegame positions where opening books, database statistics, and my opponents' previous games are irrelevant. Therefore, I remove all such columns from this new configuration. The only columns I am interested in are the default IDeA configuration columns and the engine analysis columns, as shown next.

Move	flg	IDeA	N	Master	IA	Ryb	Hsu	Hou	Cri	Kom
20. ♖h1		-0.64	136601	-0.64	-0.26 24	-0.56 18	-0.29 23	-0.52 25		
20. ♖h4		-0.64	107657	-0.60	-0.48 17					
20. ♖h1		-0.68	134645	-0.68	-0.37 27		-0.41 27		-0.41 25	-0.44 27
20. ♖h2		-0.68	113988	-0.64	-0.41 28	-0.56 22	-0.41 28		-0.41 22	-0.41 24
20. h4		-1.06	3004	-1.06	-0.85 17					
20. e5		-1.27	388	-1.27	-0.64 17					

The middlegame IDeA configuration

This configuration starts with the default IDeA columns on the left, followed by several engine analysis columns. This is the only information that is of interest after the opening statistics become meaningless or after a novelty has been played.

The standard IDeA configuration could be used in the opening phase of the game and might look like this after modifications, such as those described earlier.

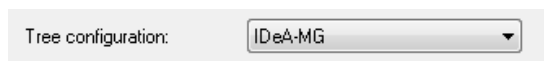
Move	flg	IDeA	N	Master	IA	Jiri	H2	Art	Total	Success	CAP	N-ICCF	%
8. ♖d2									2968	52%	+0.00	4828	53%
8. ♖b3									1376	48%	+0.04	2355	43%
8. ♖d3									181	59%	-0.29	198	52%
8. a3									123	54%	-0.04	170	46%
8. ♗xf6									68	40%	-0.18	12	33%
8. ♗b1									7	14%	-0.18	6	25%
8. f5									6	33%	-0.76		
8. a5									4	38%	-0.59		
8. ♖a4									3	33%	-0.93	3	0%
8. b3									2	50%	-0.37		

The standard IDeA configuration (modified)

The configuration starts with the standard IDeA columns on the left, followed by opening book colors. The next two columns show HugeBase statistics. The CAP column follows. It refers to a database (tree) with tens of millions of analyzed positions. Finally, you can add more database statistics. In this example the last two columns show statistics based on ICCF correspondence games.

### Changing the Default Configuration of a Project

If you have created multiple IDeA tree configurations, you may want to use a non-standard configuration for a specific project. Switch to the Home-IDeA tab and click the Edit button. The "IDeA Project Properties" dialog will appear.



Project specific IDeA configuration

Here you must select the IDeA configuration that you want to use in the project from the "Tree configuration" drop-down list. In this example I have selected IDeA-MG, which is similar to the IDeA-Middlegame configuration we saw above.

### Conclusion

The IDeA tree configuration can easily be customized to your needs. You can, for instance, add opening book colors, database statistics, and statistics based on your opponent's games. It is invaluable to have all this information at your fingertips when analyzing the openings. You can also create several different IDeA configurations, tailored for different situations, such as the opening, middlegame and endgame.

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*[Yes, I have a question for Dadi!](#)*

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