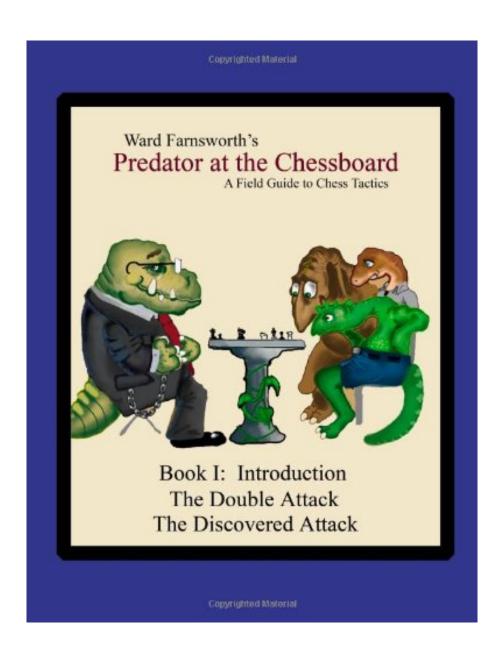


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Chess tactics explained in English: the website www.chesstactics.org in book form. This volume is the first in a two-part set. The two books together contain over a thousand examples organized in unprecedented detail. Every position is accompanied by a commentary describing a train of thought that leads to the solution; these books thus are the ideal learning tool for those who prefer explanations in words to long strings of notation. This first volume provides an introduction to tactics and explains forks and discovered attacks. (Book II covers pins and skewers, removal of the guard, and mating patterns.) A hardcover version is also available.

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Greatest tactics primer ever

By mike's brother

If you are looking for a tactics book of the "verbal-explanation" type rather than of the "worbook-with-lots-of-problems-to-solve" type, then Predator at the Chessboard Volumes I & II blow the competition away (including the tactics books by Seirawan/Silman and Alburt/Palatnik).

Table of Contents (1st edition, copyright 2007; no new editions as of date of this review):

Vol I chapters: "Introduction", "The Double Attack" (further divided into forks from each piece), and "The Discovered Attack" (subdivided into discovered attacks from each piece)

Vol II chapters: "The Pin and Skewer", "Removing the Guard", and "Mating Patterns" (subdivided into back rank and classic mates)

This book is superior to other beginner tactics books for 3 reasons:

1. Appropriate difficulty for intended audience: Many chess authors have forgotten what a "beginner" is. Farnsworth shows you several easier positions illustrating the same motif/theme then logically and incrementally progresses to more difficult versions of the theme (for instance, from the simple find-the-

bishop-fork to find-the-bishop-fork-in-three). Most of the examples in Predator at the Chessboard are 1-3 moves in depth, completely appropriate for a beginner. There isn't much in terms of lengthy alternative sidelines of analysis (>5 moves for instance) that would clearly make this book beyond a beginner/lower level (you will find lots of such lengthy analysis and difficult problems in the Seirawan/Silman and Palatnik/Alburt "beginner" tactics books).

- 2. Thinking method: Farnsworth doesn't give a thinking method per se, but he repetitively states simple things to think about when approaching a position, which can be helpful for someone learning tactics.
- 3. Numerous examples: There are greater than 1000 positions in both volumes and thus he provides dozens of examples of any given motif from simple to complex, thoroughly reinforcing the material, whereas other books show a couple token positions then proceed to give you very difficult problems.

Thus Predator at the Chessboard is accessible to the beginner/lower-level player, provides many logically progressive examples of a given motif from simple to slightly more complex, and provides verbal explanations about how to think about these tactics.

Criticisms of the book:

- 1. Expensive: cost me around \$65 for 2 volumes hardcover, but since this is the only "verbal-explanation" type tactics book that a beginner/lower-level player needs, I believe it is money well spent if you love to play chess.
- 2. The 2 volumes should be 1 volume that is 700+ pages, in my opinion.
- 3. He uses his own notation which is not quite algebraic (for instance, RxN might mean "rook takes knight"). His book is still very easy to follow... I simply prefer algebraic notation, which is also very easy to follow.
- 4. I wish that the entire line of play for each position was listed at the end of its corresponding explanatory paragraph (preferably in algebraic notation). Not only would it be a nice quick summary, but also would be good practice for those wanting to solve the >1000 positions without wading through the paragraph explanations.

Nothing beats solving thousands of tactics problems such as offered on several well known websites. In spite of this and the above criticisms, I still give this book 5 stars because it is far and away the greatest "verbal-explanation" beginner tactics primer I have ever encountered ever.

Of course, he offers this material free on his website (you can google his name and/or Predator at the Chessboard), but it is nice to have books for those times when is no internet or computer, if I am indefinitely stuck in a line, waiting room, or side of a road, and at bedtime without having to worry about lugging around my laptop and adaptor plug.

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

For the rest of us

By Amazon Customer

I have probably not gotten through quite 10% of this book yet, but I am extremely pleased. I am getting the answers that I have been searching for. How do you set up a pin? How do other players see what I am not seeing? What are the different ways to use this information?

The author of this book has the insights that I need, but much more important, he has taken the time and effort to explain all those smaller details of seeing and setting up the tactical configurations that win material and game, and most important, give you the chance to take more control of the game.

Eliminate luck and hope from the game and set up those powerful tactical maneuvers that are part of a great, artistic chess game.

I know there are lots of people who do not play tournaments, but love the game and art of chess. We don't aspire to become masters, but want to learn and understand the artistry and skills of tactical play. We don't have the time to struggle with deep discussions and try to see further into a masters explanation of high level skills, but we want to 'see' more. So much of this game is about visualization, and Mr. Farnsworth will guide you through the complexities of seeing in a manner that will actually be fun and entertaining and enlightening.

I read, study and review the information in this book everyday, and enjoy doing it. I highly recommend this book for the rest of us.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

Best tactics book - period

By Joseph D. Phelps

I have read/studies at least 20 chess tactics books and this one (with its companion book) is by far the best. The author not only give great examples of tactical motifs but he goes into incredible detail explaining the thought process one should follow when looking for the tactic in question. An example would be when he explains that anytime two of you opponent pieces and your knight are all on squares of the same color and in close proximity you should look for a fork. This seems self explanatory (after he tells you) but I just never approached looking for forks that way. Go to the authors website to practice your tactics and to find more info on these books.

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