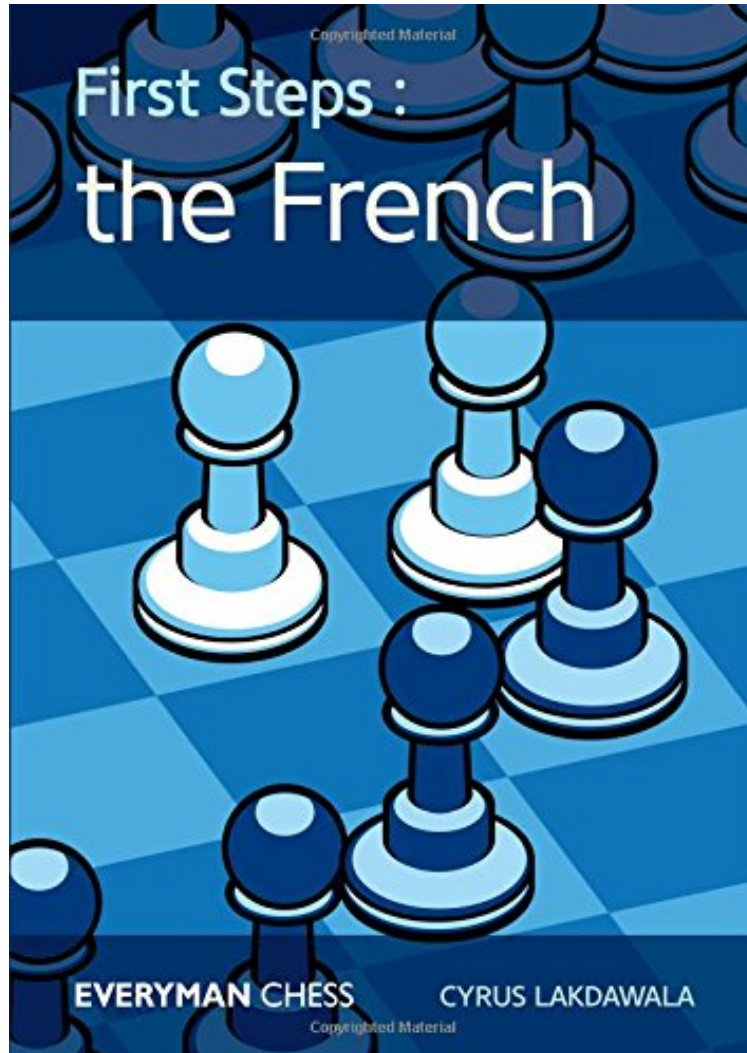


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First Steps: The French (Everyman Chess)

Cyrus Lakdawala

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Cyrus Lakdawala : First Steps: The French (Everyman Chess) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised First Steps: The French (Everyman Chess):

21 of 25 people found the following review helpful. A new Everyman series begins stronglyBy anthroguyI'm almost finished my first work through of Cyrus Lakdawala's new book on the French, so I'm providing an initial assessment, to be amended as necessary later on. I am strongly inclined to buy (and read!) Lakdawala's books: he is one of the most prolific modern chess authors, but he consistently delivers work of good quality. This is no exception.The book is the first of a new Everyman series intended for a demographic of young and/or beginning to intermediate players. As such, it does not pretend to be encyclopedic. Instead, it offers first steps in the French Defence, a well-respected opening. From mastering this book a reader is meant to be able to continue to other, more advanced and nuanced

works on the French. Does this book succeed? Yes, unequivocally. In each chapter Lakdawala provides fully annotated, key games which demonstrate effective play of a given line, e.g., the Advance Variation, the Exchange, the Classical. It would be easy, after studying a particular variation, to move to any standard chess database to identify further examples along similar lines. Approximately a third of the annotated games were played by the author, which assures the reader that Lakdawala is offering advice based on his own tournament practice with the French, thus an insider willing to initiate a newbie in the opening. Also helpful are the Index of Variations, the Index of Games, and the Bibliography, as well as Lakdawala's lively prose style (try to read through a turgid book written by one of the old Soviet Grandmasters if you don't think this matters). In nearly 60 years of tournament play, I have never employed the French. However, I'm now moving to adopt the French as my main response to 1. e4; I was strongly guided in my choice by the publication of this specific book, which makes the transition much easier. I have several other books on the French, but none as concise and thoughtful. I recommend it highly. (Disclosure: I am rated 1850 USCF.) 4 of 20 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Bruce Margolin just fine

The French Defense is a highly reliable response to 1 e4 which is popular at all levels. With the first two moves, Black creates a solid foundation in the center and seeks to put pressure on Whites position in the early middlegame. In this book, International Master Cyrus Lakdawala explains the basic ideas in the French and examines the important variations. The key ideas are emphasized with notes, tips and warnings and the readers understanding is tested with frequent exercises. This book tells you everything you need to know in order to take your first steps with the French Defense. First Steps is a new opening series and is ideal for improving players who want simple and straightforward explanations. First Steps emphasizes: * the basic principles * the basic strategies * the key tricks and traps First Steps books are based around carefully selected instructive games which demonstrate exactly what both sides are trying to achieve. There is enough theory to enable the improving player to get to grips with the opening without feeling overwhelmed. If you want to take up a new opening, First Steps is the ideal place to start.