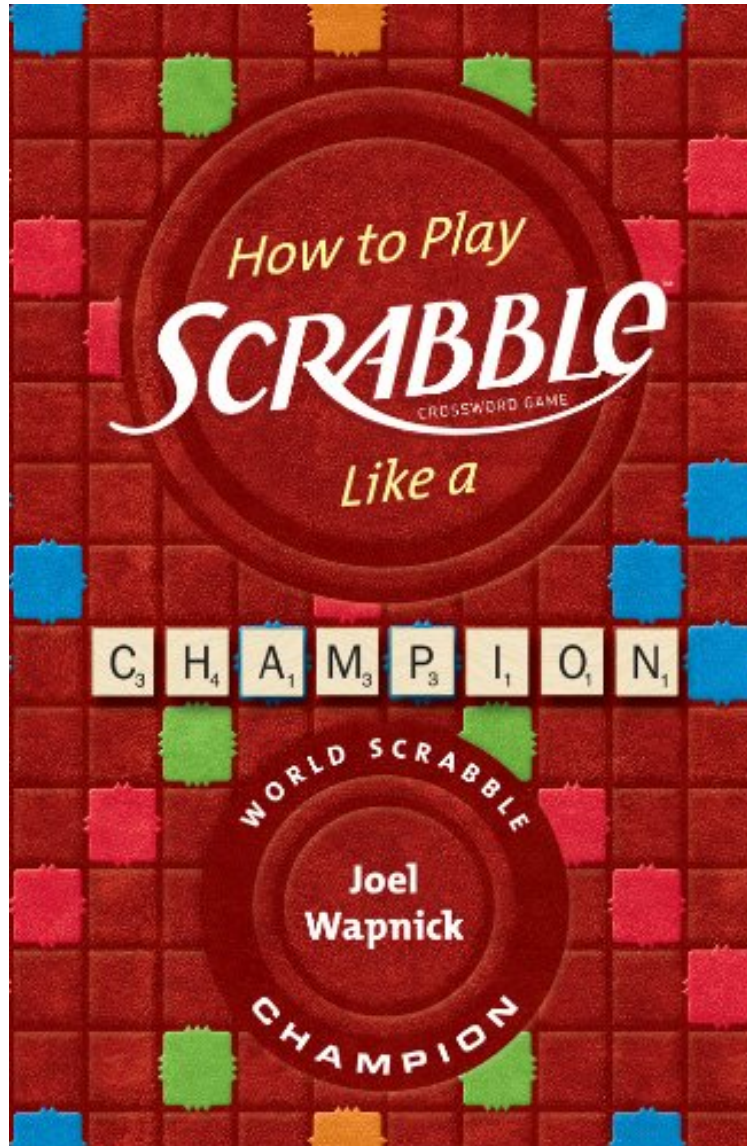


## How to Play SCRABBLE Like a Champion

Joel Wapnick

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**Joel Wapnick : How to Play SCRABBLE Like a Champion** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How to Play SCRABBLE Like a Champion:

57 of 58 people found the following review helpful. Winning SCRABBLE Strategy from a World Champion By Cornelia Guest How to Play SCRABBLE Like a Champion by Joel Wapnick For many years Joel Wapnick's The Champion's Strategy for Winning at SCRABBLE Brand Crossword Game, published in 1986, was considered one of the finest guides to SCRABBLE strategy. Out of print for several years, copies of the book could be found online

sometimes; however, the book was somewhat dated and did not include word updates dating as far back as 1991. Now Wapnick, a great SCRABBLE player who has been World Champion, National Champion, and National Canadian Champion, has updated and added to that earlier book to present a book that no serious tournament SCRABBLE player should be without. The book not only covers basics of strategy and tournament play, it explains the detailed analysis experts use in determining their moves and preparing for tournaments. For an intermediate player hoping to move up, Wapnick shares his methods for learning words and improving play. He provides a terrific explanation of how using Quackle ([...]) can help in selecting the optimal plays. At the back of the book he includes a chapter of 40 "Cool Plays," which illustrate excellent finds that are not always the most obvious, and brilliant plays that are truly breathtaking. Wapnick, who also is an expert pianist, shows readers the elegance of great SCRABBLE strategy, using examples that demonstrate the imagination and creativity the game offers. Part 1, "The Nature of the Game," provides a basic summary of the game, tournament rules, and the important game tools: words. Wapnick touches briefly on the differences between casual and tournament play, as well as between the tournament game in North America and that played in other countries. Part 2, "How to Play the Game," is the meat of the book. Beginning with a description of the various ways to score points in SCRABBLE (opening plays, hooks, inside plays, and extensions), Wapnick introduces strategy by having the reader look for hooks for bingos, then stretches into the world of setting up plays, weighing situational advantages of scoring versus rack balancing, and exploring why certain plays are more likely to result in a win than others. The extensive chapter on strategy introduces the formula valuation = score + leave, which teaches readers how to calculate valuation based on assigning point values to each letter and evaluating certain letter combinations that offer strong or weak synergy. Examples illustrate how important this rule can be in determining what moves to make. Wapnick also explains how and when to exchange tiles, pass a turn, play defensively, and/or take a risk. He shows ways, too, that your opponent's play may indicate what's on his/her rack. The section on setups is outstanding, with examples from top players showing brilliant strategy at its best. Wapnick also gives examples of well-played endgames. Wapnick shares with readers his successful method for memorizing words, plus he outlines some of the pitfalls to avoid when at the tournament. Getting a good night's sleep and eating well can help Scrabblers as well as athletes! Chapter 8, "Annotated Games," presents eight amazing games played by some of the top experts in the world, including Dave Wiegand, Brian Cappelletto, Adam Logan, Joey Mallick, Carl Johnson, Jason Katz-Brown, Evan Berofsky, Noah Walton, Lloyd Mills, John Luebke, Robin Pollock Daniel, Rod MacNeil, and Wapnick himself. This is a fascinating way to learn. Cover the answer with a sheet of paper, make your best move (on an actual board, as Wapnick suggests), and then see what the expert did--and whether Wapnick agrees. It's like being in the heads of three experts: the players and Wapnick. I'd expected a barrage of obscure words; not so. Usually the plays were ones a 1200ish player could find, but often wouldn't. I was humbled by this chapter into realizing that I play too fast, and don't look hard enough for the best play. I finished the chapter with an enormous respect for the players whose games were chosen. I cannot recommend this book more highly. Cornelia Guest is a tournament director and School SCRABBLE coach. She is the publisher of the monthly e-magazine The Last Word ([...]). 16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Is that in the Official Scrabble Player's Dictionary (OSPD)? By James Brownlow I am a casual SCRABBLE player, and thought I'd pick up a few tips to improve my game by reading this book. This book is a comprehensive look at the game and what it takes to be a serious player. For example, one must know lots of words in the OSPD and one does not make a play to maximize the number of points on a particular turn; rather one plays to maximize the expected value of the play, and that expected value is a combination of the points realized from the play and what can be made using letters left in the tray (after the letter replacements are drawn). This is some heady stuff. The implications are wide: the serious player should be familiar with lists of letter combinations that have poor "playability" and hence should not be left in the tray, advice is given on how many points to expect from using an S, a Q or a blank. How were these 'expected values' determined?", you ask.. well there's a SCRABBLE simulator called Quackle you can download and run yourself. Quackle (is that in the OSPD?) is free-ware and is an excellent SCRABBLE program; for me, worth the price of the book alone! I recommend this book to anyone who is serious about SCRABBLE. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Great insight into playing the game at a high level By Grandpa Scorpion My first exposure to Scrabble strategy was through Joe Edley's Everything Scrabble book. Mr. Wapnick's book delves into some similar territory in the earlier sections. It's unavoidable to begin a book like this with expository material but he has a fresh take on it and it's peppered with details/anecdotes from his own playing career. I feel the book shines when pointing out the amount of "scheming" that goes on in a game among experts. Shining the light on this "meta-strategy" (inferring whether or not your opp has a letter or whether (s)he thinks you do, etc) pays for itself alone. After all, it is a book about playing at the highest level. P.S. Giving a book a one-star rating based on the typeface is a lousy thing to do. If you had a problem reading the book, correct your prescription.

While it can't be denied that word knowledge is of great importance in SCRABBLE, even more imperative is knowing how to play the game, and that's what this book is all about. Written for players of all abilities, How to Play SCRABBLE Like a Champion includes key strategies, the ins and outs of tournament play, detailed analyses of eight games played by experts, and a presentation of 40 remarkable plays. From openings to endgames and everything in

between, this is how you play SCRABBLE to increase both enjoyment and winning chances.

I think it's the best book on Scrabble that's been written, and I've already recommended it to several people. --John O'Laughlin, Quackle co-programmer and expert player  
An important update....This book discusses all aspects of Scrabble strategy in great depth, using numerous diagrams and examples. --R. Wayne, Schmittberger, Games Magazine, March 2011  
An excellent book on the strategic aspects of the game...higher than Word Freak on my list of "books I'd lend out to someone considering tournament play." --Andy Saunders, tournament Scrabble player  
How to Play Scrabble Like a Champion is an indispensable treatise on Scrabble that delves into the deep nooks and crannies of the game, revealing the concrete strategies expert players have developed to master it. --Derek McKenzie, Word-Buff.com  
From the Author  
This book started off as a revision of my The Champion's Strategy for Winning at Scrabble Crossword Brand Game, which was published by Stein Day back in the Dark Ages of Scrabble theory. Scrabble play has evolved considerably over the intervening years, and How to Play Scrabble Like a Champion reflects this evolution. It differs profoundly from my earlier book. The opening section of the chapter on strategy is of particular value, as it presents a series of rules for rack management versus scoring that you will not find anywhere else.  
About the Author  
Joel Wapnick lives in Montreal, teaches at McGill University's School of Music, and has been playing tournament SCRABBLE since 1975. He has played in all ten World Championships, winning in 1999 and finishing second in 1993 and 2001. He also has won the U.S. National Championship (1983), finishing second once and third twice. He won the Canadian National Scrabble Championship in 1998 and 2011, and finished third on two other occasions.