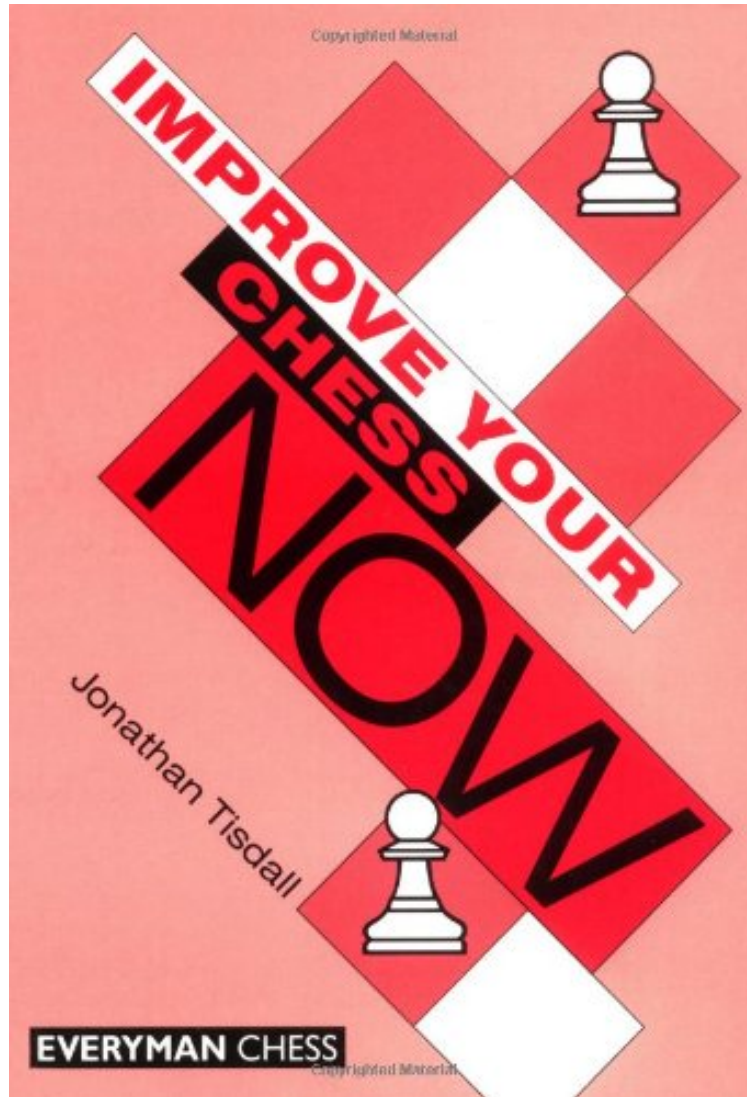


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## Improve Your Chess Now

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**Jon Tisdall : Improve Your Chess Now** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Improve Your Chess Now:

3 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Good, difficult and bad enclosing. By FBUNGE Good guy and good writing. But only for very advanced players. As surely title shows. It is not easy to follow the sequences although this is main theme. Not clear tree form but loosely written. Nevertheless interesting blindfold comments. Not read whole thing yet. Very very bad is enclosing. After one hour's pages are flying in the room. And as I have bought it via international transfer probably US. I am sitting in Germany. The fee with approx 10 \$ is very high. So costly

product. Frank 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Self-Improvement Treatise By R. Tobias This is one of the more respected self-improvement books out there. It is a seriously written work. No 'chess made easy' type of hype here: this is for those serious about their chess, who are willing to put real time and effort into their games. The central part of the book to me is his attempt to improve upon Kotov's fabled 'tree of analysis' in "Think Like A Grandmaster". Kotov's approach, as you may well know is as controversial as it is famous, with most GM's that I have seen comment on it saying that it is too rigid an approach to be consistently applied in over the board play. Tisdall tries to give a more realistic, flexible and workable approach to analyzing positions, combining Kotov's concrete approach w/ e.g., verbal assessments of what is going on. He recommends techniques to improve the clarity and depth of your calculations as well. Other topics covered are playing bad positions, pattern recognition/training, assessing the values of the pieces in various types of positions, and a section devoted to various nuggets of chess wisdom. The last sections, on mating patterns and tactical themes are probably not really necessary, as many, many fine works already exist for these topics. But that is a quibble, as the meat of the book is of real value to the developing player, who needs to graduate from hit or miss groping for moves to a more advanced method of analysis. As has been said by prominent chess instructors, the most important element of one's chess strength is the quality of their analysis, and this is a fine book for advancing in that critical skill. Highly recommended. 13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Great lessons for the price By Igelfeld Why you might consider buying this book: 1) It dispels the myth that you should calculate in chess like a computer (tree of analysis). Clearly, as humans, we possess an evaluative ability that allows us to make decisions based on nonlinear thinking. The key point in this book is that we shouldn't overly-complicate our analysis and instead should gauge our choice of moves based on "main lines" that are in accordance with our plan and with the immediate threats imposed by our opponents. All in all, not one of the best chapters in the book, but certainly a valuable lesson. 2) The book provides a great deal of instruction on chess thinking. The author provides rationale for the assessment of positions and plods through important themes in chess. Although this is found in many books, Tisdall seems to know what it's like to be a learning chess player and focuses on the central questions students stumble across (and answers them!). 3) Tisdall provides a great number of references and gives you his opinion on why they're valuable (or in some cases, not so valuable). In a sea of chess books, this is important. 4) This is not a book on openings with endless variations and sub-variations. I think chess writers finally have figured out that few people improve by reading detailed books on a single opening. This book is not comprehensive in its instruction (for example, it is just over 200 pages), but working through the examples is very instructive for each phase. What didn't quite work in the book ... 1) The method of stepping stones isn't very well thought out (or explained). It would have made a great deal of difference for the author to reference this technique much more often in his book. He has some limited explanation of visualization versus tactical sequences but it really isn't clear what he's recommending (of the two or if both, when to apply one and not the other). After done reading the book, you may disagree with me and wish to give the book a five (like many other reviewers), but I'd love to hear this subject better explained. The book is very readable without a chess board. There were a few examples where I needed to actually see the board to work through sub-variations. But that is a limit of my own ability. 2. The reference to Shogi just didn't quite work for me. I don't play the game and the limited explanations could just as easily be integrated into the text without any outside reference to the game. Andy Soltis does the same and although his books are almost all first rate for instructional value, I have the same problem. In conclusion, this is a relatively inexpensive book with a great deal of good instruction that would benefit almost any player. The newer chess player might need to leave some of the sub-variations for a second reading or perhaps when they've improved a bit. But often Tisdall will point out mate in one penalties! I recommend this book for anyone wishing to sit down and take some lessons from a grandmaster who is explaining the game as if he were there.

In a strikingly original self-improvement manual, Jonathan Tisdall draws on his own experiences to explain why erratic results and painful setbacks occur, and shows how to institute a training program that can lift the player's game to new heights. Tisdall's improvement ideas will fire the imagination of players at all levels.

The question of how to improve is one that vexes many players, so a practical guide dealing solely with the topic is very welcome. GM Tisdall himself has an interesting chess C.V., having been an active U.S. professional player for some years, before settling in Norway and devoting much of his time to coaching. It is only in the past few years that he has made the final jump to the Grandmaster title, despite long being held in high regard as an opening theoretician and analyst (he was Speelman's second for his 1988 Candidates match with Short). So, this extremely thoughtful and well-planned out manual (which took three years to complete) is clearly borne out of playing and teaching experience. Tisdall takes as his starting point Kotov's "Think Like a Grandmaster", praising his tree of analysis for its usefulness as a training exercise, but questioning its value in practical games. To quote GM Anatoly Lein, which Tisdall does at the very start, "I don't think like a tree - do you think like a tree?" so we are given a more practical guide on how to calculate. Many of the methods advocated are, of course, not entirely new (the idea of pattern recognition is a well-known example) but there is often a refreshing twist. For instance, in the section illustrating strategical themes, the

minority attack (as in the QGD) is examined from various angles, including where both sides have castled \*queenside\*. There are also exercises to develop calculation skills: playing through games blindfold (an idea borrowed from Alexander Beliavsky), and the use of 'stepping-stone diagrams' (a Tisdall original - while trying to visualise a position some moves hence, a player fixes a half-way position in the mind's eye, then, when this is secure, continues calculating). Another pet Tisdall scheme is piece value, where he sinks his teeth into a few more myths. He quotes with delight Steinitz's approval of the Staunton piece count: knight 3.05, bishop 3.50, rook 5.48 and queen 9.94, and adds, "Surely the scientists of Staunton's day had better things to do with their time?" Positional sacrifices, 'playing for the king' and the much-maligned bad bishop are themes all given a thorough re-working. He also discusses opening variations which lead to a 'difficult' material imbalance such as rook and pawn versus two minor pieces. An admirable effort has been made to really get to grips with the learning process; Tisdall even takes up the Japanese game shogi, in order to 'begin again' on the learning curve. His enthusiasm is infectious, and one has the feeling that in a few years' time this work will take its rightful place as a recognised classic in the field of training manuals. -- Tim Wall, The British Chess Magazine, December, 1997

From the Back Cover  
In an important and strikingly original self-improvement manual, Jonathan Tisdall draws upon many years of experience as both player and trainer to explain a new approach to chess thinking. His ideas will be especially welcomed by players frustrated with the mechanical and unnatural 'candidate moves' and 'tree of analysis' approach advocated by many previous texts. Tisdall's innovative ideas extend to the psychological aspects of chess, and in particular the defence of bad positions. The final sections of the book provide an armoury of mating patterns to be absorbed into the reader's subconscious. As proof of the effectiveness of his methods, in the course of writing this book, and by using the very techniques he recommends here, Tisdall made a quantum leap in playing strength and achieved his life-long ambition of gaining the prestigious grandmaster title. Grandmaster Jonathan Tisdall is a professional player and an experienced chess journalist who has reported on many world championship matches. Originally hailing from the United States, he now lives in Norway, where he teaches pupils of a wide range of playing standards. He is well regarded on the international circuit as an opening theoretician and analyst, and has been Jon Speelman's second in World Championship Candidates' matches. (5 11/16' X 8 1/4', 224 pages, illustrations, index)