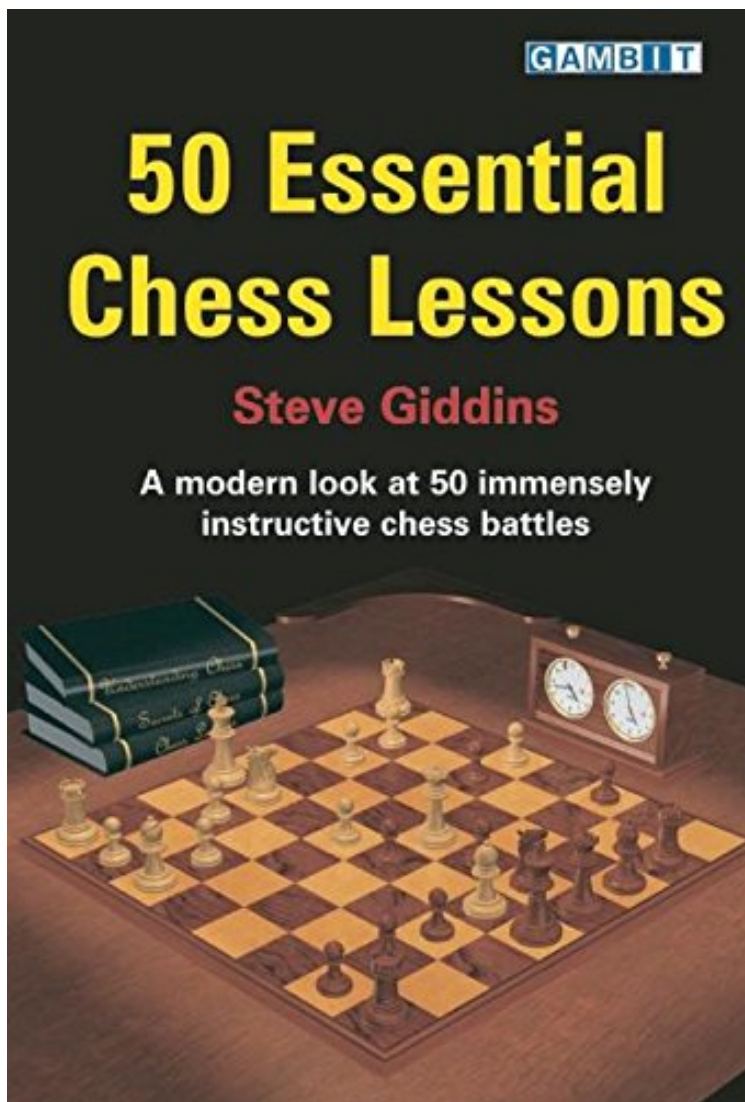


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50 Essential Chess Lessons

Steve Giddins

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Steve Giddins : 50 Essential Chess Lessons before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 50 Essential Chess Lessons:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A Beginner's Footpath From Chernev To Nunn By Mike HIs there a bridge between the popular Irving Chernev book "Logical Chess: Move by Move" and John Nunn's excellent (and variation intensive) "Understanding Chess: Move by Move"? The answer is yes, and it's contained between the pages of this book by FM Steve Giddins. I'll call it a happy medium between the two. It's written in explanatory fashion -- geared toward a relative beginner and on up -- with games divvied into five instructive motifs: Attacking the King,

Defense, Piece Power, Pawn Structure, and Endgame Themes. For the raw beginner, Chernev's book is better, but as the player improves, this book would be the most logical continuation. It's not quite move by move, but it's also not so densely mired in variations a la Nunn (which I personally don't mind). It's too bad Chernev's "The Most Instructive Games of Chess Ever Played" is not in algebraic format (though, again, it doesn't matter to me), as it is superior to this book. The main strengths of this book are threefold: 1) In addition to the usual suspects (Sicilian, Queen's Gambit Declined and Ruy Lopez, among others) Giddins includes several modern (actually hypermodern) games, which the classic Chernev book "Logical Chess..." did not. It has one example of the Catalan, several games which feature the King's Indian Defense, as well as quite a few Nimzo-Indians, Queen's Indians and a Grunfeld, not to mention four examples of the English; 2) Some of these games are played by talented but more obscure (to neophyte Westerners) Soviet players (I intentionally use the word Soviet because of the period of the games); and 3) Giddins summarizes the main thrust of each game at its conclusion and lucidly details the point of the opening as related to its strategy, something most opening book neglect to do. In short, there is a lot to be learned by a beginner and even for players up to around 1800 USCF. If there is one negative for the beginner or developing player, it lies in the format of the moves. Rather than listing each two-ply move vertically, which allows a player to cover up the next moves with a postcard so as to think on his or her own and try and guess them, the main moves are written horizontally (which is fine for variations). All in all, until one is ready for a Nunn or Igor Stohl (much less a Garry Kasparov dictionary of variations -- see the "My Great Predecessors" series), not to mention less annotated game books (for those more talented players who need no explanations), this is a good way to go. If the book works for you, the next logical step is Giddins' follow-up "50 Ways to Win at Chess" -- which is misleading, as it really means there are 50 Games to learn from. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book By Carlos Cardoso The book comes with 50 well annotated games and explains every crucial position in the game. It gives the reader great insight on what the players were thinking and outlines many different plans of each games. The information is easy to digest, as the author does a great job explaining the plans. 5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Great book...maybe just a tad over my head though By Customer This was an excellent book to work through. As I stated in the review title this book was a just a bit over my head. But not enough over my head that I didn't enjoy it or get something from it. This is a book that I will definitely go to again in a year or so. I imagine I will pick up even more from it then. I think it is okay to study a little bit of material that is just out of your grasp. It gives me something to aspire to anyway. If you study too much chess material that is a little out of bounds or that is all you study then you might be asking for trouble. Anyway, great book, great games, well written and well constructed. Highly recommended! Gambit really does turn out high quality books. I am talking about the construction of the book itself. They are meant to be used and built to last!

Steve Giddins has chosen 50 supremely instructive games - some old, some new, and including many that few readers will have seen before. He has annotated these games in detail from a modern perspective, explaining the useful lessons that can be learnt from them, while avoiding the harmful dogma that characterized many older works of this type. Topics include: Attacking the King, Defence, Piece Power, and Endgame Themes. Each game is followed by a recap of the main lessons to be learned. Giddins writes in a highly accessible down-to-earth style that appeals to club players seeking to improve their understanding of practical chess. His knowledge of Russian-language chess literature has enabled him to find many excellent examples that have not appeared in previous western literature.

About the Author Steve Giddins is a FIDE Master from England who plays regularly in international events and has frequently contributed to the British Chess Magazine. He has gained a reputation as a writer who provides useful, no-nonsense advice on topics of genuine practical importance. This is his third book for Gambit.