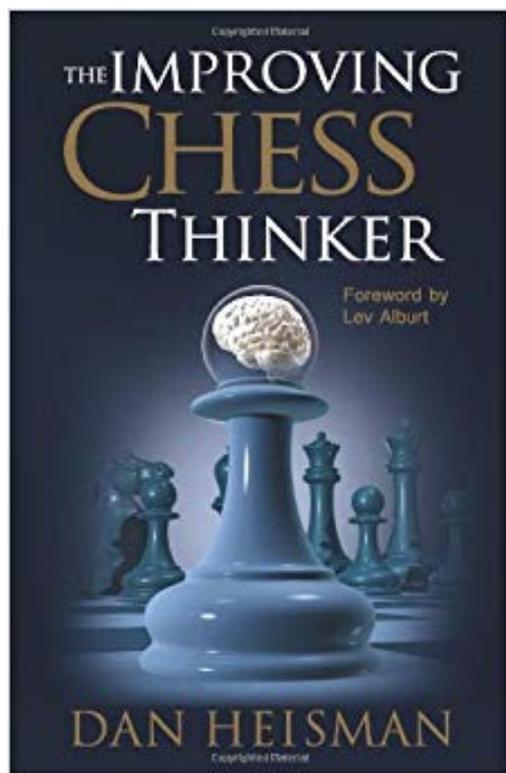


## The Improving Chess Thinker by Dan Heisman, Lev Alburt



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When a club player decides he wants to raise his rating, he typically looks to improve his middlegame or endgame understanding. Often, however, the true secret to improvement lies not in studying additional chess material but in learning a more powerful thinking process. The Improving Chess Thinker provides representative thought processes from all classes of chess players, highlights the differences between these levels, and provides insight to help players raise their thinking process to the next level.



## Reviews of the The Improving Chess Thinker by Dan Heisman, Lev Alburt

misery

Like most of Heisman's book, this is entertaining to read, accessible to the average player and explains things in plain english, not just a series of evaluations I'm supposed to figure out for myself. Based purely on the content, I've probably give this 4 stars (it is not quite as dense on good information as Heisman's "Amateur Games" book.

However, I really have to severely criticize the Kindle edition. The diagrams used are only contained at the beginning of the book. This makes sense for a paper edition when you don't want to waste paper printing the same diagrams over and over. A bookmark is a simple solution in a paper book. However in an electronic edition, there is no such compelling reason not to repeat the diagrams and flipping back and forth on a tablet is very annoying. Making matters worse, there is no table of contents so moving around in the book is very difficult. Once again a publisher has just plopped the paper edition into electronic format and put it up in the store with no effort to make the book friendly for electronic readers. Publishers need to stop doing this if they want to keep customers and authors need to hold their publishers to higher standards. Chess publishers in particular need to work harder at making their products more useful in electronic format.

I would highly recommend viewing the sample to see if you can live with the format before buying this.

Walan

This was an interesting book on chess. It was not much on strategy or opening or the endgame, but it was a study of the thinking processes of various class levels in chess. The author did a study with various positions by having chess players of different ability think out loud as they looked at the board. He noted what each person was thinking and grouped these findings together to look for common themes. What did class D players think, what did class A players think, and what did a Master think. This process helps the student to learn on what to focus on in the chess game. One of the best ways to improve in chess is to improve the process of thinking. What are you looking at first, what is some of the success thinking patterns. The book was good because he always summarized his findings at the end of each chapter and gave the highlights for each class level. The chapter on "How to Think" really puts everything together. The only negative of the book was maybe it being shorter, and just giving less examples and providing more analysis of the thinking patterns of the different classes. It was a helpful book and one that is good in teaching you how to think through a game of chess.

Cordanara

This book just describes the thinking process of players of all levels (from beginner to master), by making them to write down their verbalized analysis (protocols) given for a few positions (called "De Groot exercises"). After reviewing these protocols, presenting them by levels (from E to A class players, and then the Masters), the author gives some recommendations about how to manage your analysis process in order to improve your chess level. He also gives some clues about improving time management (trying to avoid the player to fall into time trouble).

Despite these clues could be useful, the author reaches to a conclusion that all chess players know very well: you will improve your level if you make an effort to analyze better. And analyzing better means: try to see broadly first, and deeply then (if needed). Just the same things that Kotov recommended along his famous books "Think like a grandmaster", "Train like a grandmaster", and "Play like a grandmaster".

In summary, I could say:

Why 3 stars? Because it is useful to see the big differences between the thinking processes of a beginner and a master: that makes you aware of the things you need to work on in order to get better analysis skills.

Why not 5 stars? After all you understand that the book deals with: "Your chess will improve if you make an effort to analyze in more detail before touching a piece, moving it and pushing the clock, trying, on the way, to avoid time pressure", which is something everybody could guess without much help.

I think the book is useful mainly for beginners.

Castiel

Of all of the books I have about chess, about systems and strategy and problems and move-by-move analysis, this little book has the most practical information for me for improving my chess. My chess

problem isn't a lack of understanding per se (though I definitely have a lot of lack), but the sloppy, undisciplined thinking I bring to the game. And it's why I am stuck playing mediocre chess. Heisman's book addresses the thought process in chess, the kind of thinking a player needs to apply to the game to move to the next level and the level beyond that. Heisman provides a relatively simple-to-grasp (not so simple-to-apply) set of steps for thinking through each move in chess. Granted, the description of these steps takes up a relatively small portion of the book, two or three chapters, and the examinations of the protocols I found not so interesting, but those two or three chapters I think are invaluable to succeeding in chess, and also taming the wandering mind.

Zicelik

I picked this book up for a lot of reasons. I was wondering what they were saying about lower rated players, plus I wanted to see if this was a good book to have some of my students get. I like it for what it is. Dan Heisman is really good at explaining things. He is up there in my top three favorite authors for chess books. I think this is a good book for under 1500-1600 in helping them see what they are doing wrong. However, higher rated players will need to read this more carefully and don't expect one book on this topic to change your game results. I find the higher i climb in chess. The more books on one topic it takes for me to get the next break through. However, I am not discrediting this book for someone around 2000. It is also a great book for those who work with kids and they are over 2000. Sometimes we forget how they actually think and see a position.

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