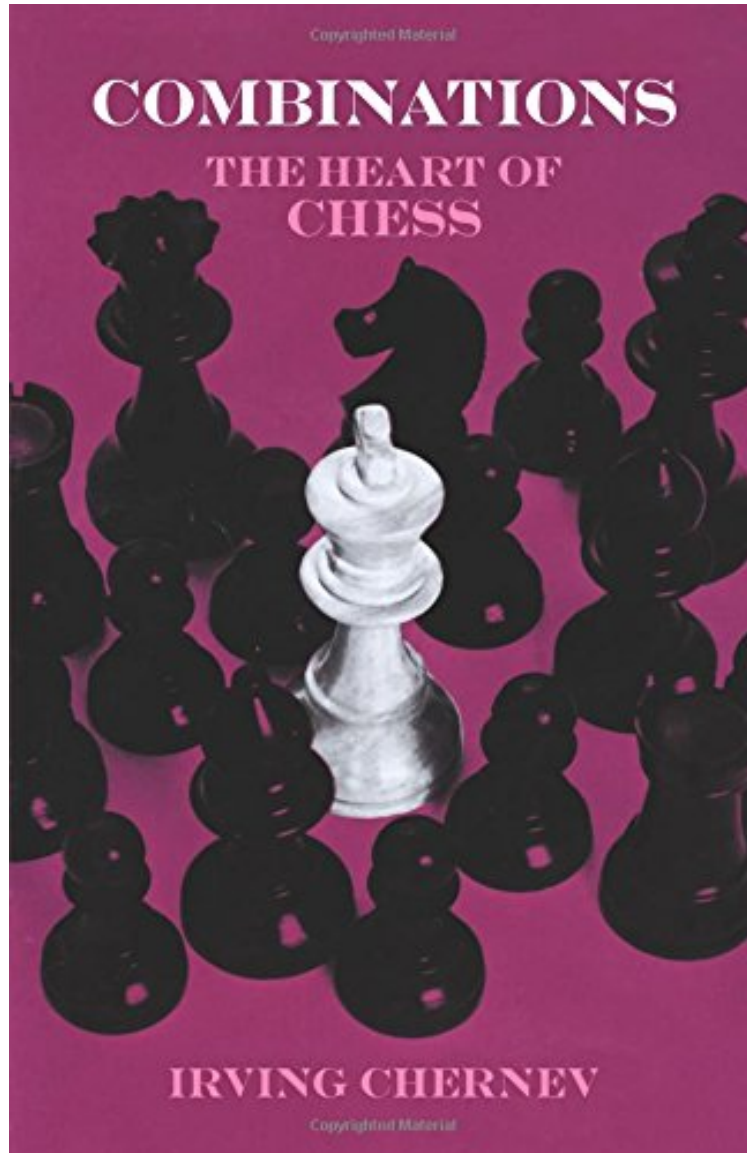


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Combinations: The Heart of Chess (Dover Chess)

Irving Chernev

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"Combinations: The Heart of Chess:" the Kindle version of this wonderful book has an inadequate page layout. By Mike Powers I recently discovered a Kindle edition of another old-school chess book that I own in print format: Combinations: The Heart of Chess by Irving Chernev. This marvelous and entertaining book gives readers countless numbers of examples of the best combinations of moves (what we more frequently call chess tactics today) that make for winning at chess. Irving Chernev, whom I consider one of the most prolific, knowledgeable, and entertaining chess writers of the twentieth century, wrote this book with chess players like me in mind: ones of average ability who want to improve their skills through study and application. Chernev's prose sparkles on every page. His explanations are straightforward yet detailed, and his prose is sharp, witty, and concise. It is simply a joy to read. Unfortunately, the Kindle version of Combinations: The Heart of Chess is beset with serious problems: First, the publisher, Dover Publications Inc., did not convert Chernev's English descriptive notation to the more modern and useful algebraic notation. (Most publishers who Kindle-ize older chess books do convert to algebraic notation.) I think English descriptive notation is much more difficult to follow on a chessboard. The second problem is even more egregious. The publisher apparently decided it did not need to make the diagrams large enough for easy reading. On my laptops 15.6-inch screen, I can barely discern the tiny boards and chess pieces in each diagram. On my Kindle Fire HD7, the diagrams are almost indecipherable. Combinations: The Heart of Chess could have and easily should have - garnered a 5-star rating from me. However, I must deduct 2 stars from my rating of this book's Kindle version because of its inadequate page layout. The publisher should seriously consider reissuing its Kindle version of Combinations: The Heart of Chess with algebraic notation and bigger, better diagrams included. (2 Stars ^ 3) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By Lou Very good, old classic.

Irving Chernev's outstanding chess books earn him a high rank among the world's top chess authors. In this well-annotated text, Mr. Chernev guides his readers to an understanding of the subtleties of combinative play. Step-by-step from the simplest combinations to the most complex, the book explains the intricacies of pins and counter-pins, Knight forks, smothered mates, and other elements of combination play. There is a discussion in chapter five of combinations lurking in roads not taken alternate lines of play show up in Chernev's notes to the game, while the sixth chapter, "Convincing the Kibitzers," shows the second-guessers what would have happened had the masters done the obvious. (Some disastrous combinations show up here.) A host of boomerangs follow cases where the player didn't look far enough ahead and his combination, instead of bringing about the opponent's ruin, paved the way to his defeat. Chapters 821 take up combinations used by such great players as Tarrasch, Botvinnik, Nimzovich, Steinitz, Rubinstein, and Pillsbury; the sacrificial combinations of Anderssen and Spielmann; the dazzling brilliancies of Morphy, Keres, and Alekhine; the deadly attacks of Marshall; the almost unfathomable ideas of Lasker; and the matchless creations of Capablanca. Mr. Chernev's thoughtful annotations unravel the secrets of each of these plans. A diagram accompanies each combination; an index, by player, leads the reader to the combination he is looking for.