

## *How To Beat Your Dad At Chess (including the 50 deadly checkmates)*

Fancy improving your Chess abilities but don't have 30 years going spare? If so, this book could be your salvation....

In essence, I've always thought of Chess as the martial art that one can do in an armchair; battle without the blood. As such, there are few authors more qualified to write a 'get good quick' book on the art than Murray Chandler. A Grand Master, he is one of the few people in the world to have a 100% record against Gary Kasparov, the 'Bruce Lee' of Chess; very reassuring.

So, the first thing to report about his book is that it is *not* filled with jargon, nor is it aimed primarily at people who are already 'good'. Instead it assumes very little knowledge other than an understanding of the rules, and any terminology that *is* used is explained both in the introduction and the useful glossary at the end. Secondly, the level of research undertaken is impressive, the writer going back centuries to compile his '50 deadly checkmates' which are observed from the side of 'Black' as well as 'White'; unusual in books of this type, and as a consequence, even competent players are likely to learn something here. My one very slight criticism of the book is that the great majority of the 'finishes' discussed involve the strategy of 'castling', something rarely part of my game. Finally, and perhaps most importantly of all, Chandler very early on makes a point of stating that 'Dad' can be anyone, any player that manages to get the better of you, and this is the book's great selling point. In supposedly aiming it at children (though the blurb does say 'from 8-80'), the author allows very amateurish players to learn how to improve without having to buy a scary book for adults. Moreover, the many jokes are just as funny to anybody; any book that has 'What to do if your Dad is Gary Kasparov' as its Epilogue can't by any stretch of the imagination be accused of being too serious.

Despite its martial roots – Chess originates from China as do arguably the martial arts themselves – this ancient yet simple board game serves a vehicle for men (and women) to engage in healthy competition without any realistic danger of death or injury. With this being the case, even the most cynical observer has to acknowledge that the study of Chess remains as pertinent to the training of all competitors, from sportspeople to generals, as it ever was. I like the game, and indeed this book, for just that reason.

8 Sausages out of 10

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