

Best Chess Books

Books for beginners	Pros	Cons
Life-Changing Magic of Chess	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engaging storytelling approach 2. Makes chess fun for beginners 3. Encourages problem-solving skills 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not a structured chess curriculum 2. More about mindset than deep strategy
AlphaBetChess	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perfect for young beginners (3-10 years old) 2. Uses storytelling to teach chess concepts 3. Fun and interactive illustrations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does not cover all of the chess rules; additional books/resources required to learn how to play chess 2. May not go deep enough for older kids 3. Some chess terms maybe difficult for young children to understand (ex. Attraction, Deflection) and may require a parent / coach who knows chess to explain the term outside of the illustration
Storytime Chess	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uses characters and stories to explain chess moves 2. Great for very young kids (ages 3-7) 3. Engaging illustrations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focuses mostly on piece movement, not advanced strategy 2. Requires additional practice beyond the book
Chess for Children (Murray Chandler)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Simple and easy to follow 2. Covers chess rules and basic strategies 3. Fun illustrations and puzzles 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More suitable for ages 6+ 2. Lacks depth for tournament preparation
Raise a Genius! (László Polgár)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insights from the father of the Polgár sisters (Judit, Susan, Sofia) 2. Focuses on structured learning and talent development 3. Useful for parents serious about chess training 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less of a step-by-step chess book, more about educational philosophy 2. Intense training approach may not fit every child
Winning Chess Strategy for Kids (Jeff Coakley)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Covers openings, tactics, and endgames in a fun way 2. Designed specifically for kids 3. Engaging exercises 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requires an instructor or parent guidance for younger kids 2. Not as visual-heavy as other beginner books

Learning Chess the Right Way (Susan Polgar)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written by a top chess educator and former Women's World Champion 2. Step-by-step approach perfect for structured learning 3. Covers tactics, strategy and checkmate in a progressive way 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Best used with a coach or parent guiding the child (not great for self study for young children) 2. Multiple volumes - commitment required to go through the full series
Chess Fundamentals (Capablanca)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written by a World Champion 2. Covers essential strategies clearly 3. Good for parents wanting to improve their own chess 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language may feel old-fashioned 2. Not a children's book—better for adult learners
Chess is Child's play (Laura Sherman & Bill Kilpatrick)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written specifically for parents with no chess experience 2. Breaks down concepts into easy-to-teach lessons 3. Fun, interactive activities to keep kids engaged 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focuses mostly on young beginners (ages 3-7) 2. Doesn't go deep into advanced strategy