



Tesuji

James Davies

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Tesujis are the tactics of short range combat in the game of go. This volume presents over three hundred examples and problems of them, aimed at training the reader to read and spot the right play in all sorts of tactical situations. It covers a wide range of material while concentrating on fundamentals; its problems manage to be both hard enough to challenge and easy enough to solve, and there are enough of them to keep the most avid busy.

Tesuji Details

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Author : James Davies

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Jeff says

This is a fantastically well-written and well-laid-out book. It presents concepts, explains their applicability, gives a few examples, and then gives 2-4 practice problems. My game is improving rapidly as I continue my study.

jed says

A must for anybody learning go. I had already been playing for a while when I read it, yet it still had tactics to offer. And even if you know all the tesuji in the world there are plenty of puzzles to solve.

I have read this book maybe 3 times cover to cover, but found it much more useful to read a chapter and then play some games trying to apply the tactics I had learned.

Andrew says

This is a great book chock-full of techniques as well as problems to test yourself on.

Some tesuji (tactics) can be recognised and immediately played in-game. However many others require more subtle execution and are harder to recognise in-game; unfortunately this book describes those mostly by example and it's up to the reader to try to extract their general principles. Indeed many tesuji reappear under different functions without their critical properties highlighted.

The book can be heavy going; pages after pages of diagrams and problems to go through (I got lost in the section on ko). The author includes a lot of explanation, but I felt that he should have included more higher-level summaries and analysis to emphasise key concepts and make the book less of a descriptive compendium.

Davies' two-stage ko (need to win two kos in a row) versus two-step ko (one move approach ko: need to win the first ko, play an approach move to make the ko direct, and then win it again) terminology is annoying.

Stefano says

Tesuji by James Davies (1998)

Eric Nguyen says

Even though it's elementary already, I still don't get some stuff inside. Not recommended for a COMPLETE beginner like me, you've got to at least know some basic stuff like hane, joseki and probably ladder and net, etc.

Chloe Adeline says

Amazing! There is so much to learn in here!

A 5d friend of mine gave me this, Attack and Defense, and Kageyama's Fundamentals. He said that I can basically keep re-reading each and they're all I'll ever need. While I've read numerous other books, I do think that these three have been the most enlightening and helpful books I've read.

I first worked through this cover to cover from 15-10k, and then again from 9-7k. There are parts I've fully absorbed, but so much of it is fuzzy or just didn't stick at all...I'm 5k now and will continue to revisit it!

Peter says

A superb book to teach the tactics of Go.

It's almost worth a 5* but falls down just slightly in that it presents dozens of different techniques, but doesn't really explain how to choose between them, so can leave you paralysed by too much choice. But practice all these problems and sooner or later you will find yourself outthinking your opponent and getting that warm glow of satisfaction and smugness when you split apart stones that (s)he thought linked, or linking stones that seemed hopelessly lost.

Joy says

#3 in a great series of books for beginner Go players--that is, players who have mastered the basic rules but are pretty much at sea when it comes to actual strategy. My only complaint is that this book forces me to think so hard that I end up getting a headache when I try to read more than one chapter at a time.

Manny says

Combinations are the heart of chess, as they say, and similarly *tesuji* (literally, "skillful moves") are the heart of Go. This book gives you a nice introduction.

Here's an example of a tesuji, the "crane's nest", which is about as basic as it gets; it's sort of the Go equivalent of the smothered mate. Recall that, in Go, you capture by surrounding the opponent's stones. Black has just played 1, trying to connect the three stones on the left to the circled stone on the right:

White now counters with the clever move 2, and continues up to 8 (Black's stone 7 is played at the same point as White's 2):

To sum up, White lets Black surround a stone, but ends up surrounding the whole Black army. If you took the trouble to follow this and liked it, maybe you're already hooked!

Frank says

I read this book about fifteen years ago. It's time to read it again.

Many good basic techniques in here, useful in games and helpful to review.
