

How to Use the *Think Like A King*[®] Thinking Belts It's All About Motivation...

The Thinking Belt System is a motivational tool analogous to Karate Belts. It is designed to inspire and reward students as they progress through the Chess Workouts curriculum. Post this form as a Wall Chart where the chess club meets so everyone will be challenged to read and learn! Monitor student progress via Chess Club Manager 2.5 (Windows network users) or via their printed **Score Report Forms**, which list the Workout Points earned for each Chess Workouts chapter completed. (See the sample Score Report Form included with your Chess Club Manager documentation.) Completing enough new chapters in any Chess Workout Book earns a promotion to the next level; mark the chart with a gold star or check next to the Student's name.

There are 28 steps in the Thinking Belt ladder. The following table lists the number of chapters for each Chess Workout, the number of promotions to be earned, and when to promote. You may optionally choose to require a minimum performance (i.e. at least 70-80 percent of all possible Workout Points earned in every chapter) before promoting. Remember that any chapters scored below that level must be redone after a user-specified delay (network version) or on a different computer (single user version, since individual student scores can't be improved on the same computer station).

Title	No. of Chapters	Number of Promotions Per Volume	Promote after completing chapters:
Vol. 1: Tactical Thinking	18	4	5, 10, 15, 19
Vol. 2: Checkmate Thinking	21	6	3, 6, 9, 13, 17, 21
Vol. 3: Endgame Thinking	16	5	3, 6, 9, 12, 16
Vol. 4: Opening Thinking	20	5	4, 8, 12, 16, 20
Vol. 5: More Tactical Thinking	21	4	5, 10, 15, 21
Vol. 6: More Checkmate Thinking	22	4	5, 10, 15, 22

There is no strict order required in going through the Chess Workouts. What is important is the learning effort, not the order of the particular skills acquired! The order of books shown at the top of the Wall Chart is for guidance only. It's much more important to be flexible and match the books to a child's interests, age and ability than it is to follow any set pattern. Continuous motivation is the only key!

Younger players or those rated less than 900 should start as a White Belt with either Vol. 1: *Tactical Thinking* or Volume 2: *Checkmate Thinking*. Players with *successful* tournament experience (i.e. more wins than losses) and a rating over 900 might choose to skip Vol. 1 and start as a second-degree Orange Belt with Vol. 2 (though there is still great value in the practice afforded by the material in Vol. 1). *First Lessons in Chess* is for novices, and is not counted in Thinking Belts.

Players over 1000 could skip Vols. 1 and 2 and begin at the Blue Belt level. (However, while experienced players may find Volumes 1 and 2 quite easy, there is something new to learn. Also, the practice here builds stronger foundations, much like piano scales do in music, so some coaches require that all books be read.) Experienced players who are fourth grade and older should start with Vols. 3 or 4, in either order. (These are recommended for more mature students who have the patience to learn from a lesson-based style, as opposed to the puzzle-solving formats used in the earlier and later Volumes.) Younger players experienced enough to be a Blue Belt but with more chess energy than reading patience might choose to jump right to Vols. 5 or 6, *More Tactical Thinking* and *More Checkmate Thinking* first, saving *Endgame* and *Opening* for later.

ONE MORE GREAT WAY TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS...

Thinking Tags: As students advance through the Thinking Belt levels, they can earn an extra reward: A matching colored metal Thinking Tag (sold separately) keyed to their progress. Tied to schoolbags and displayed like a Varsity letter for chess, they'll soon be the coolest collectibles at school. All the kids in your chess club will want to work – and learn – their way up to the Black Belt Tag!