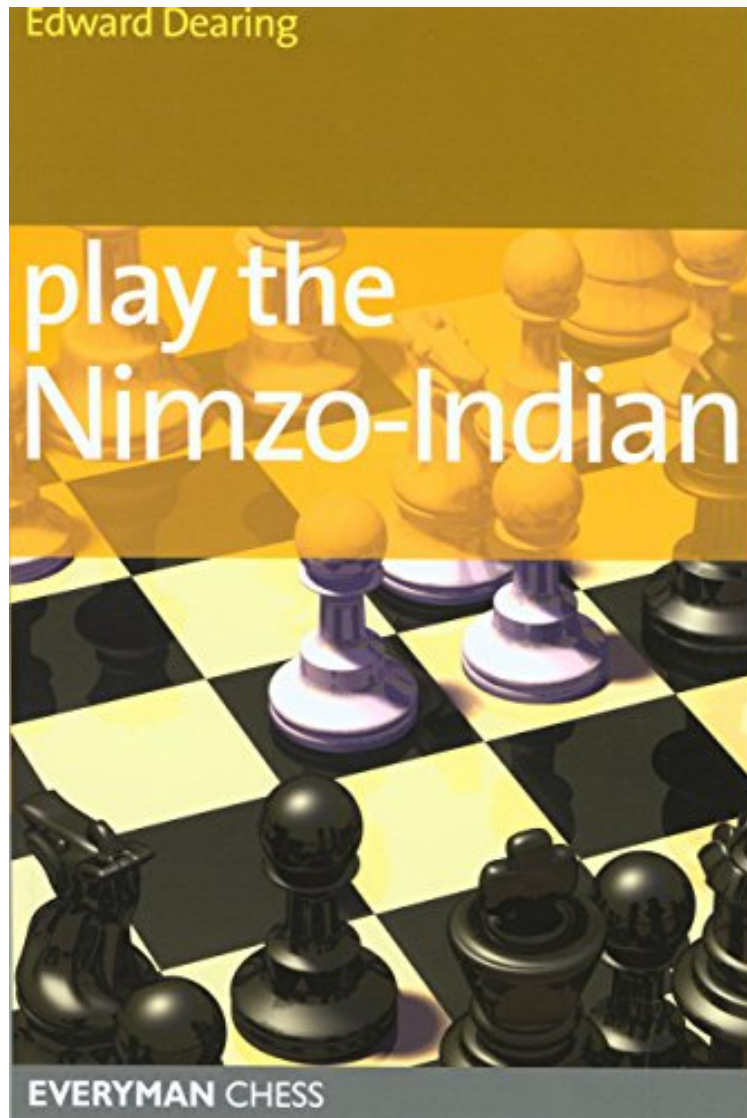


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Play the Nimzo-Indian

Edward Dearing

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Edward Dearing : Play the Nimzo-Indian before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Play the Nimzo-Indian:

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. "Play the ..." series dense in a good wayBy Kelly K. Patterson
Everyman Chess is the leading chess publishing house in my humble opinion. There books are not only informative, which of course is the point, but they are formatted nicely (no odd page breaks or weird fonts or sloppy layout) and the paper used is acid-free and will last for years to come if treated properly. There is excellent contrast as well between the ink and the paper as well as being glare-free which is a big plus when you are staring at pages with

small letters and numbers on them for hours at a time. So with that said, this series of "Play the ..." is one of their best though it is not for beginners. They should see the fine "Starting Out ..." series. In my title for this review I said it was "dense in a good way" and by this I mean this selection in this series and this series fill these books with enough games and alternate paths within those games to keep a wood-pusher busy for as long as they please. There is more information than most players at the club level and even the tournament level will probably ever use but it is easily accessible in these well indexed books. Further, Mr. Dearing gives fine advice and direction on what variations are popular and effective and provides good philosophical thoughts behind each. For a well-rounded player unfamiliar with the Nimzo-Indian they might start with this book since it is so well explained but I'm sure they would get farther and faster by starting with the "Starting Out ..." selection of this opening. Other selections in the "Play the ..." that I own and treasure are "Play the King's Indian" by the KID expert Joe Gallagher and "Play the Najdorf: Scheveningen Style" by the fine author John Emms, and "Play the Ruy Lopez" by Andrew Greet and they are all very fine and very 'dense' (in a good way) book as they pack more punch for your buck than any other series of a similar level. I can't recommend this series and most of what Everyman Chess offers (tho you can also typically rely on the reviews posted by fellow chess nuts here on).

83 of 90 people found the following review helpful. An Outstanding Repertoire Book for Serious Players By Los Angeles Master "Play the Nimzo-Indian" is one of the newest offerings from Everyman Chess, one of the top publishers of chess books in the English language. It is written by a young Scottish IM, Edward Dearing, who is perhaps best known for his previous book "Play the Sicilian Dragon," a book which received almost unanimous praise from reviewers (with the exception of GM Sergey Tiviakov, who strongly criticized it in New In Chess Yearbook 75). Dearing is quickly establishing himself as one of the more conscientious and instructive writers of books about chess openings. "Play the Nimzo-Indian" is a repertoire book for the player of the Black pieces. It is important to note that the Nimzo-Indian arises after 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4, and this book only provides a repertoire for Black from that position. Black players taking up the Nimzo-Indian as a defense to 1.d4 for the first time will also need to come up with a repertoire against the other major third move alternative, 3.Nf3 (the Queen's Indian, Bogot-Indian and Modern Benoni are three possibilities), and against less theoretically challenging deviations (the Torre Attack, Trompovsky, Colle System, London System, Veresov, etc.). However, the Nimzo-Indian itself is a huge subject, and it seems to me that it is correct to cover a Nimzo-Indian repertoire in a separate book. As a caveat to this review, I should note that I don't presently play the Nimzo-Indian with the Black pieces myself, although it was my first defense to 1.d4 and as a 1.d4 player I have played various lines against it over the years, so I have some familiarity with it. "Play the Nimzo-Indian" is in Everyman's usual "complete games" format, in which the author uses complete games to demonstrate and explain the critical lines in the repertoire. I consider this format to be optimal for players learning a new opening, because including complete games allows the player to study typical middlegames and endgames arising from the opening as well as the opening theory. There are 50 main games in this book, which is perhaps close to the average number for an Everyman opening book. However, this book is a substantial 224 pages in length, well above average for an Everyman production. The extra pages result from a greater than usual amount of analytical sidelines and explanatory material in the text. There are several features in this book that I consider to be improvements on Everyman's traditional "complete games" format. First, there is a two-page index of variations in the back which I don't recall seeing in previous Everyman books but which is extremely useful for quickly locating games played in specific lines. Everyman has received some criticism in the past for not having an index of variations and finally seem to have done something about it. Second, and perhaps more significantly, after each of the 50 main annotated games there is a short (anywhere from a paragraph to almost a full page in length) "Conclusions" section (e.g., "Game 1 Conclusions," "Game 2 Conclusions," etc.) which discusses the theoretical significance of the preceding game, lessons to draw, and often notes typical middlegame maneuvers/themes/ideas. I found these sections, notwithstanding their brevity, to be very useful in helping me assimilate the games and place them in their proper theoretical context. This is a very welcome innovation from Dearing and I hope Everyman considers making it standard in their future opening books in the "complete games" format. As for the theory and games presented, the Nimzo-Indian is a sound and dynamic defense to 1.d4 that has been played by virtually every World Champion of the last 50 years and the majority of the world's top players in that period as well. It is extremely solid while presenting opportunities to play for a win with Black against all levels of opposition. Because there are so many viable subvariations in this opening, Dearing has had a wealth of lines from which to choose his repertoire, and in general I think he has done an excellent job in making his selections. Of course, the selection of which subvariation to play in a major defense like the Nimzo-Indian involves issues pertaining to personal style and preference, and not everyone will be happy with every one of Dearing's choices. However, the richness of the Nimzo-Indian is such that you will always have a number of alternatives if you don't like a specific variation chosen by Dearing. And overall I think Dearing has done a good job of presenting a repertoire that will appeal to a broad spectrum of players. "Play the Nimzo-Indian" presents a Nimzo-Indian repertoire that will be playable (and is played) at virtually any level, from the club player to the super-GM. This is not the kind of "quick fix" repertoire often presented by lazy or dishonest authors and intended for weaker players who want an easy solution to their opening problems. The players of the Black pieces in the annotated main games include such famous GMs as Karpov, Anand, Korchnoi, Ivanchuk, Gelfand, Short, Bareev,

Adams and Khalifman. In general, Dearing presents a very serious, even ambitious, repertoire, and chances are good that the main repertoire choices by Dearing will remain playable for the rest of your chess career. The downside of choosing a really sound opening repertoire is that there is usually quite a bit of theory involved, as sound lines are popular with good players. Dearing has done a very reasonable job of limiting the amount of theory presented, often by choosing slightly less theory-intensive but very sound alternatives to the absolute main lines. That having been said, presenting a serious Nimzo-Indian repertoire is not a trivial task, and notwithstanding the "complete games" format this book has a lot of theory packed into its 224 pages. Because of the amount of theory, I would primarily recommend this book for ambitious players willing to do a certain amount of work to prepare a sound opening that will last them for a lifetime. Due to the wealth of explanatory material, I think that most of the book would be accessible to players above 1800 elo, although ambitious lower-rated players might find much that is useful and enlightening here. I give this book 5 stars. In the genre of opening books in the "complete games" format, it is one of the two or three best that I have seen.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Limited repertoire and inadequate unpacking of basic concepts

By Mr. Get Real

This book only offers a narrow repertoire for Black which streamlines and greatly simplifies the authors task.... which is good for him! But, realistically what are you the reader really learning here if you are only exposed to one response in any given line? On top of that, each variation covered here has only a very short introduction for the chapter, often just a single paragraph, where not much is explained about the overall goals. Instead you are apparently expected to get the majority of your general knowledge in an indirect manner from the annotations of the several example games that follow. I would have preferred a much more robust introduction section for each major variation chapter. In this book the intro sections fail to adequately prepare you for the key concepts that are encountered in the games that follow which makes it difficult to latch onto the main ideas. I'll more fully explain below with two examples. For instance, in the Leningrad Variation it is important to never play an early h6 to deflect the White Bishop pin at g5. Why? Because Black can threaten to play Qa5 attacking the unprotected White Bishop while simultaneously delivering check. And if there is a Black pawn between a Black Queen on a5 and the White Bishop, Black can still threaten to push that pawn thereby obtaining both a pawn attack and a discovered attack on the White Bishop from the Queen. Again and again this theme pops up in this variation - a fundamental idea that is often the underlying motif behind the moves and is transferable in concept to other Nimzo-Indian setups. If I was to explain just one idea in the Leningrad Variation to another player it would be an admonishment never to play h6 early on here for the reasons stated above. I would think this information would be fundamental, even essential. But I learned none of this from the overview section for the Leningrad Variation in this book! I got that key information elsewhere from a DVD by Sergei Tiviakov (highly recommended!). To be fair, the author does briefly mention this basic concept in the context of just one specific game, but it is effectively buried in the very last paragraph of the chapter as an afterthought where 90% of readers are going to miss it. This concept rightfully belongs front and center in the overview section, not buried as a footnote. As a result I feel that this book is not fully preparing you with key concepts necessary to fully understand the Nimzo-Indian Defense. Here is another example - the general idea behind doubling White's pawns on the c-file is that the lead pawn can be attacked by Black's pieces from the following piece placements Ba6, Na5, Rc8, Qa5 or Qc7, etc. And if there is a Black pawn in front of the doubled White pawns then Black seeks to exchange pawns such that the c file is then opened to attack with the Rook or Queen. However, none of this was explicitly spelled out in one place in this book, although some bits and pieces are buried at various points in the individual game annotations. I think the author could have more carefully prepared the reader for these elementary themes even if he might think they are obvious they are not. It would have been nice to at least spell it out at some point and bring it all together in one conceptual framework as I just did above.... and it would not have taken up much additional space in the book! Just a few more sentences in the intro somewhere would have been useful to most readers. The dots are often there, just not well connected. I feel that I should not have to be digging for this sort of basic information and having to piece it together myself - that is what I bought the book for!

How about the choices for the repertoire offered here? After working with the Classical line I found myself favoring games that result when Black plays c5 versus the d5 that this book recommends. But d5 is the only option covered here and it leads to the Romanishin Variation. There is absolutely nothing here in this book about the traditional c5 approach for the Classical line. To his credit, the author outlines his reason for ignoring the c5 line and for recommending only the Romanishin Variation - he explains that d5 is more "dynamic" and it is an easy "shortcut" of sorts to avoid the rich variations that result from c5. And again this makes the author's job much easier (!), but d5 here often results in a very early tradeoff of the Queens. It seems to me that rushing into a premature endgame is a major drawback for many players, myself included. So... I would have thought it would have been prudent to also provide an outline of the traditional c5 moves as well so that I could at least make the choice between these two drastically different approaches for myself. This is the downside of a limited repertoire you get very limited options and a very narrow perspective. No thanks!

It would also have helped greatly if the author was more consistent in his repertoire choices across all of the various lines. The majority of the time he favors d5 but then occasionally he switches gears and goes for c5. Not very helpful if his goal is to streamline what you need to remember... and if that is not the goal then why limit the coverage to such a narrow perspective to begin with? To be fair, it appears that his

primary intent is simply to try to get a game that is likely less well known to White opponents - presenting them with problems they are not familiar with. That is fine, and a good strategy but it still leaves the reader stranded in a certain sense without additional options. Overall, I do not think a limited repertoire is the way to go with the Nimzo-Indian, it's just not that sort of opening. At some point you are going to want to know more about the other options as did I. Besides, club players will typically go out of book very early, so I think understanding the general goals of this opening is far more useful than learning a very limited and narrow repertoire. I guess if you are willing to blindly follow the author's pet lines you will be fine, but just be aware that path is indeed narrow. As for myself I needed to supplement this book with other resources. I also believe the author could have provided a bit more information on the alternatives not covered, explaining in more depth about whether the lines he ignores are nonetheless still decent, bad or about equal to what he offers? Just saying something like "it's less dynamic" was not nearly enough information - even just a few more explanatory sentences could have been useful. The positives While I thought the overviews were lacking, the author does provide good annotations on a game by game basis. This is the main strength of this book and for experienced players perhaps this is enough. The author takes care to identify key squares, important open diagonals and optimum piece placement. He also provides summary paragraphs after each game with insightful discussions about the main takeaways - always good analysis, but again this is only covering a very narrow snapshot of the possible themes that could result from one particular game. What is missing, as I have noted above, is a comprehensive overview in the intro sections. To fully cover your bases in terms of a response to d4, where White tries to avoid the Nimzo-Indian, you will also need to learn the Catalan and perhaps even the Ragozin Defense. But, those openings are not covered in this book nor would I expect them to be covered here. In any case that would be the second phase of your study of a complete strategy against d4. The first order of business is learning the Nimzo-Indian Defense proper. Unfortunately for that task I found this book to be inadequate. I needed to seek out additional books and DVDs to learn the lines I favor that are not covered here. In summary, this book is good at what it does in terms of providing a quick out of the box opening repertoire, but fails to adequately cover the overarching themes. Because of the limited choices in terms of alternative lines I personally found that the Sergei Tiviakov's DVD from ChessBase No Fear of 1.d4! Vol. 2 Nimzo-Indian worked far better for my purposes. Tiviakov covers just about EVERYTHING. He is very dry, but also very efficient and thorough. Perfect! Exactly what I wanted but did not find in this book.

The Nimzo-Indian is one of Black's most universally popular and respectable answers to 1 d4. It could be said that no other opening allows Black to play for a win from such a sound positional basis, while its flexibility gives rise to a multitude of different positions rich in tactical and positional play. The list of Nimzo-Indian admirers runs like a who's who of the chess world: Garry Kasparov, Vladimir Kramnik, Vishy Anand, Anatoly Karpov, and Michael Adams are just a handful of top Grandmasters who have utilized it with great effect. With the Nimzo-Indian being such a fashionable opening, some Black players are put off by the possibility of having to learn a labyrinth of different variations. However, in *Play the Nimzo-Indian*, Edward Dearing solves this problem by constructing a concise and workable repertoire for Black, offering a solution against each of White's tries, whether it's a critical main line or a tricky side variation. Readers will gain the necessary knowledge and confidence to begin playing the Nimzo-Indian in their games. Explains an opening favored by the world's elite. Written by a renowned openings expert. Covers all of White's main tries.

From the Back Cover The Nimzo-Indian is one of Black's most universally popular and respectable answers to 1 d4. It could be said that no other opening allows Black to play for a win from such a sound positional basis, while its flexibility gives rise to a multitude of different positions rich in tactical and positional play. The list of Nimzo-Indian admirers runs like a who's who of the chess world: Garry Kasparov, Vladimir Kramnik, Vishy Anand, Anatoly Karpov and Michael Adams are just a handful of top Grandmasters who have utilized it with great effect. With the Nimzo-Indian being such a fashionable opening, some Black players are put off by the possibility of having to learn a labyrinth of different variations. However, in *Play the Nimzo-Indian* Edward Dearing solves this problem by constructing a concise and workable repertoire for Black, offering a solution against each of White's tries, whether it's a critical main line or a tricky side variation. After reading this book, you will have the necessary knowledge and confidence to begin playing the Nimzo-Indian in your games. *Explains an opening favoured by the world's elite* Written by a renowned openings expert *Covers all of White's main tries Edward Dearing is a young International Master and one of Scotland's leading players, making his debut for the national team at the 2004 Mallorca Olympiad. Outside of chess, he has a degree in law from Cambridge University and is currently a practicing lawyer.