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Second-Degree Black Belt Sudoku® (Martial Arts Puzzles Series)

<SECOND-DEGREE>

BLACK BELT SUDOKU



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Frank Longo



Synopsis

Everyone loves sudoku puzzles, finding them impossible to put down. The only problem: having enough sudokus to solve! Created in the United States, these addictive conundrums were originally called "Number Place" puzzles until their recent rise in popularity in Japan, where the name translated as sudoku. However, in a true sudoku, unlike a "Number Place" puzzle, the grids are symmetrical. This trait makes for a more elegant solve. Every puzzle included inside is symmetrical, which is not always the case in other sudoku books. In this "Martial Arts Sudoku" series, we've indicated the skill level necessary to complete each book in the same way Japanese karate levels are ranked: by different colored belts. This is the Second-Degree Black Belt volume, filled with puzzles that will provide a sly, absorbing test for even the best, most proficient experts. You'll go crazy for these super engaging brain baffleers!

Book Information

Age Range: 8 and up

Series: Martial Arts Puzzles Series

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 40 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

I have not started using this yet. It was a Christmas gift. I am rating it high because I am familiar with this series, having started using it at the White Belt level. I like the consistency of difficulty in each level, the high quality of paper (which can handle all the erasing of notations), and there is only one solution for each puzzle. From one level to the next, there is not a huge change in difficulty, making

for a smooth transition from level to level, with lots of practice for strategies of logic you discover in each of the ever more challenging levels. For example, at the White Belt level, you can pretty much solve puzzles with crosshatching, singles and hidden singles, towards the end, a few puzzles probably had some doubles that had to be identified for elimination of candidates. It's been a long time; I don't remember exactly. At the Green Belt level, you solve puzzles with strategies such as recognizing singles, doubles, triples (think, if I remember correctly), and a few required the X-wing strategy. I'm currently working in the Brown Belt book of this series. At this level, so far I've been able to solve the puzzles with crosshatching, singles, hidden singles, pairs, hidden pairs, triples, hidden triples... A few puzzles have required the X-wing strategy to solve them, also. I'm sure there are other strategies of logic I have used to solve puzzles in both the Green Belt book and the Brown Belt book. However, none of the first 200 puzzles at the Brown Belt level have required what is considered "advanced" logic such as XY-Wing, Fishy patterns, etc. Of the 200 puzzles I have attempted, there are three puzzles that I have not completed because I'm stumped. I suspect they could be solved using remote pairs chains logic to eliminate some candidates. For some readers, in other words, these are easy puzzles to solve, while for other readers, they're difficult puzzles, or even impossible puzzles to solve. Difficulty of any Sudoku puzzle is subjective to the skills and knowledge that a person has acquired. I'm doing my best to describe strategies needed to solve puzzles but there are another 100 puzzles that I have not yet started (at the Brown Belt level). It's likely, I will need to learn more advanced strategies to complete all of the puzzles at this level. And, I am certain that the Black Belt level will require even more advanced strategies than those required to complete the puzzles in the Brown Belt level, since all-in-all, the puzzles consistently increase in difficulty by level. (That said, the Green Belt level actually seemed to have a few puzzles that were more difficult (for me) than the Brown Belt level so far. But this is probably because it was more difficult for me to learn to discover hidden doubles and triples, for example, than other logic (which may be more challenging for another individual, and easier for me)). Again, difficulty is subjective. I wish ALL Sudoku books listed the strategies of logic one needs to know in order to be able to solve them, so that it would be easier to find books at the difficulty level desired. In any case, I hope this review helps you.

Not nearly as good as the first-degree book, but it's still pretty good. Some of the puzzles are too complex too soon. I'd like something halfway between the first "green belt" book and this one, but this is good enough if you're addicted to sudoku and don't know what to do after the first "green belt" book in this series.

This is a collection in the familiar format, starting with a brief introduction, 300 puzzles, followed by the puzzle answers in the back. The annoying thing I find in sudoku books is that the "answers" show the solved puzzles -- but are useless for understanding *how* the puzzles were solved. If you get stuck on the logic of answer, you get the answer -- but you don't understand how the answer was reached. On those occasions when I get stuck, I use one of a few on-line sights that "walk you through" the logic. If you start this book right after having completed its series predecessor Black Belt Sudoku (by a different author, Michael Rios), be prepared for a bit of a shock. The puzzles in the previous book could not in any way be considered to be as difficult as advertised. You could solve every puzzle in that book without even making notes, much less breaking a mental sweat. These puzzles, on the other hand, are tough. If you read the (current) "most helpful" critique here, it mentioned things like "X Wing" and "XY Wing." Those techniques (and more) are indeed techniques you will need to solve many of these puzzles. I got so stuck on one of these puzzles (#4) that I gave up and went to an on-line puzzle solver to show me the logic I was missing. Except -- the first site I went to couldn't solve it either! (That got me curious, and the next two sites I entered the puzzle in *were* able to solve it -- if I remember correctly, it required use of a technique called "XYZ Wing.") That may give you an idea of how difficult *some* of these puzzles are. Are all of these puzzles that hard? No. I am currently working on puzzles in the 20's. There are two other puzzles I've gotten stuck on so far, and went on-line to solve. I have not previously had to learn the "wing" techniques mentioned. I now realize I will have to learn them if I'm to solve *all* the puzzles here. So out of more than 20, even with my limited knowledge, I've been able to solve all but 3 without help. But each puzzle tends to take time and thought. If you rate these with a four star system of difficulty, I would rate only a couple of them (so far) as a three, and the rest as all fours (or higher!) If you're looking for book that's a challenge, I hope my description of where I am in knowledge and ability helps you decide if this book is for you or not. Based on its predecessor, I had expect an easier time solving these puzzles. I bought the book for when I had a few minutes to "kill," and this book, for me, isn't well suited for that: the puzzles are hard. But when I have more time and am in the mood for a challenge, this is where I come. And yes, I'm picking up some new "techniques" along the way. Enjoy!

Good intermediate sudoku puzzles. Advertised as "not so easy ". Has many challenging puzzles. Not a book for a beginner. Need to have a knowledge of sudoku strategy.

The secret of Sudoku is that you could do the same puzzle every other day for the rest of your life. For almost a year now I've enjoyed (aka wasted countless hours) solving the puzzles in this book. The third degree book was doable, but it's not like we're saving the world by Sudoku. I find these I can do to relax and still pay careful attention to the audiobook I'm listening to.

I just want hard puzzles. I did most of the Days of the Week series and moved on to love this book. I will be getting the next one. No guessing, follows the logic rules. I have tried some Will Shortz books but the difficulty ratings are too blurry. Is a "Harrowing" harder or easier than a "Frightening Fierce". So I stick with Longo's books that way I know exactly what book is the next difficulty up. Use a Eraser Mate erasable pen and it works fine as long as you don't try to erase stuff months old. The only improvement would be spiral bound for easier holding.

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