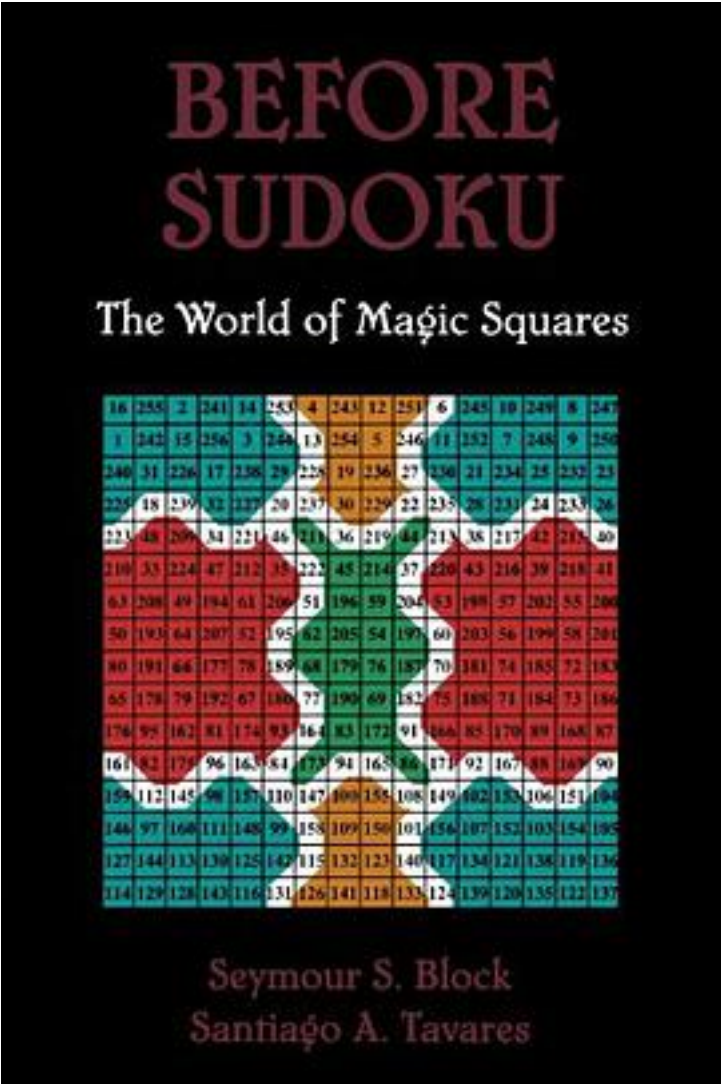# Before Sudoku

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Sudoku has become a vastly popular and even addictive game. But fans may not know that Sudoku is a recent offshoot of the venerable Magic Square, which dates back over 4,000 years to ancient China, where it was literally considered magical. Indeed, Magic Squares have fascinated centuries of mystics, astrologers, and some of the world's most brilliant thinkers, including Ben Franklin. In Sudoku and Magic Squares, Seymour Block and Santiago Tavares offer a crystal clear and engaging tour tour of Magic Squares, tracing their footsteps through through ancient and medieval history and illuminating their uses in art and design, statistics and electronics. The book provides a delightful account of a mind-boggling variety of magical squares, ranging from simple 3 x 3 and squares, to magic cubes, magic circles, magic pyramids, and even "the Beastly Magical Square," whose magic sum is 666. Of course, the authors also cover Sudoku, describing how the game became a world-wide phenomenon and revealing various strategies for solving the puzzles. And along the way, the book offers readers many fascinating facts--for instance, Sudoku was invented in 1979 by an American architect living in Indianapolis and was originally called Number Place. Oddly enough, though the puzzle is known around the world by its Japanese name (which means "single numbers"), many Japanese still call it Number Place. We also learn that in a 4 x 4 magic square, there are 880 different solutions that will yield the magic sum of 34--a surprisingly large number until you remember that there are over 2.6 trillion possible combinations. Filled with lots of original puzzles for gamers to solve, Sudoku and Magic Squares is an entertaining book that will delight anyone who loves a challenge, including all fans of Sudoku.

作者介绍:

目录:

Before Sudoku_下载链接1_

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