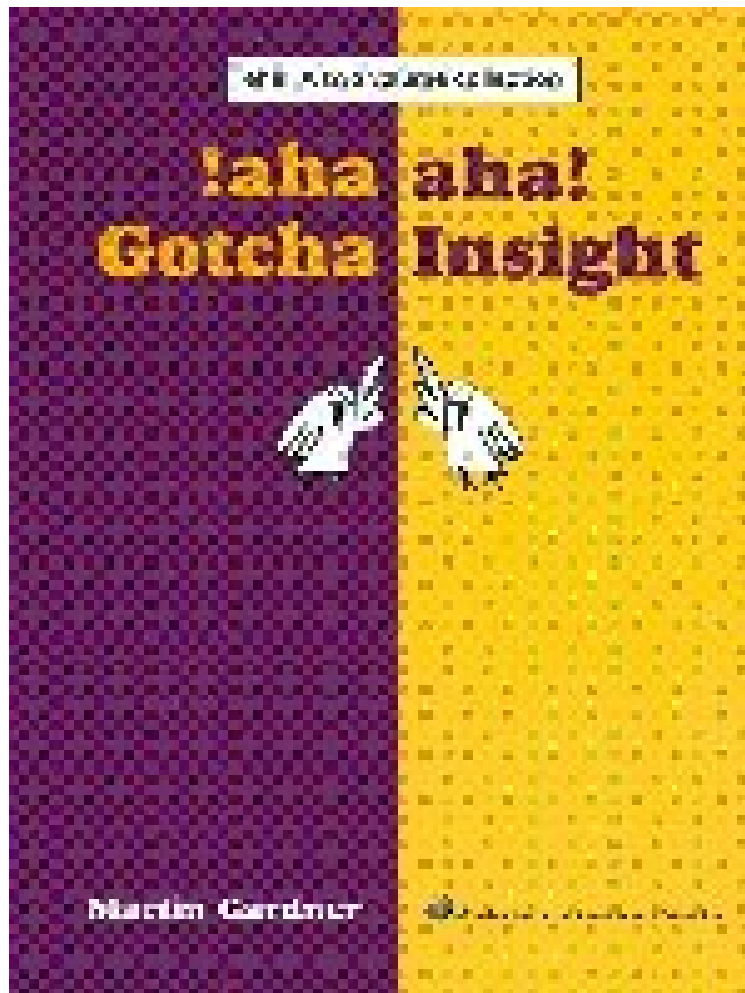


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Aha!: Aha! Insight and Aha! Gotcha (Spectrum)

Martin Gardner

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Martin Gardner : Aha!: Aha! Insight and Aha! Gotcha (Spectrum) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Aha!: Aha! Insight and Aha! Gotcha (Spectrum):

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you through exactly the wrong conclusion, then steps back and brilliantly deconstructs the argument so that you can see where your normal human condition fails you and why the unintuitive answer is the mathematically correct one. That said, he does it in a way that involves minimal math and only a basic understanding of logic and reason. That's not to say the book is dumb or dumbed down. Nothing could be further from the truth. It tackles some very complex problems and some issues that have confounded mathematicians and logicians for centuries. Some of the problems don't even have an answer, and he even manages to walk you through why we've been unable to answer the question even though the answer seems obvious. Overall, it's just a delightful book that's easy to read and leaves you much smarter than you were when you started it. There's not many books that can make such a claim.

"aha! Gotcha" and "aha! Insight" are here combined as a single volume. The aha! books, as they are referred to by fans of the author Martin Gardner, contain 144 wonderful puzzles from the reigning king of recreational mathematics. In this combined volume, you will find puzzles ranging over geometry, logic, probability, statistics, number, time, combinatorics, and word play. Gardner calls these puzzles aha! problems. He explains that aha! problems "seem difficult, and indeed are difficult if you go about trying to solve them in traditional ways. But if you can free your mind from standard problem solving techniques, you may be receptive to an aha! reaction that leads immediately to a solution. Don't be discouraged if, at first, you have difficulty with these problems. Try your best to solve each one before you read the answer. After a while you will begin to catch the spirit of offbeat, nonlinear thinking, and you may be surprised to find your aha! ability improving." Studies show that persons who possess a high aha! ability are all intelligent to a moderate level, but beyond that level there seems to be no correlation between high intelligence and aha! thinking. So dig into some of the puzzles in this book, and prepare yourself for an aha! experience.

About the Author Martin Gardner published his first book in 1935. Since then he has published more than 60 books, most of them about mathematics and science, but also philosophy and literature. He has charmed readers of all ages with his mathematical insights and his sense of fun. He has written one novel, *The Flight of Peter Fromm* and a collection of short stories, *The No-Sided Professor*. He wrote the popular *Mathematical Games* column for *Scientific American* for 25 years. The entire collection of all of Martin Gardner's *Scientific American* columns, *Martin Gardner's Mathematical Games*, are available from the MAA, on one CD in a searchable database. This CD contains all 15 of the published books that contained these columns.