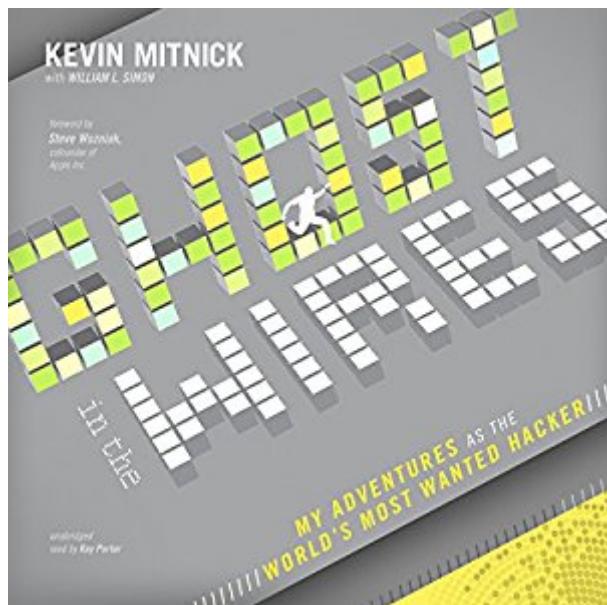


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# Ghost In The Wires: My Adventures As The World's Most Wanted Hacker



## **Synopsis**

Kevin Mitnick was the most elusive computer break-in artist in history. He accessed computers and networks at the world's biggest companies-and however fast the authorities were, Mitnick was faster, sprinting through phone switches, computer systems, and cellular networks. He spent years skipping through cyberspace, always three steps ahead and labeled unstoppable. But for Kevin, hacking wasn't just about technological feats-it was an old fashioned confidence game that required guile and deception to trick the unwitting out of valuable information. Driven by a powerful urge to accomplish the impossible, Mitnick bypassed security systems and blazed into major organizations including Motorola, Sun Microsystems, and Pacific Bell. But as the FBI's net began to tighten, Kevin went on the run, engaging in an increasingly sophisticated cat-and-mouse game that led through false identities, a host of cities, plenty of close shaves, and to an ultimate showdown with the feds, who would stop at nothing to bring him down. *Ghost in the Wires* is a thrilling true story of intrigue, suspense, and unbelievable escape and a portrait of a visionary whose creativity, skills, and persistence forced the authorities to rethink the way they pursued him, inspiring ripples that brought permanent changes in the way people and companies protect their most sensitive information.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

*Ghost in the Wires* is the story of Kevin Mitnick, self proclaimed computer hacker. Mitnick takes us through most of his hacking career, and also explores some of his personal and family relationships

and conflicts during his career.==== The Good Stuff ===\* Mitnick writes very well, and the book moves quickly. I ended up reading it in a single evening, and was actually sad when it came to the end.\* While the book describes some of the technical details of his exploits, anyone with even an inkling of how computers work will have no trouble understanding 95% of what happens in the book. Most of his more interesting exploits seem to be of the "social engineering" variety, namely talking people into doing him "favors" which compromise their own security.\* Mitnick is reasonable, for the most part, about his exploits. He admits to his exploits, and at least claims remorse for the trouble his hacking caused for his family.\* The book includes his attempts to flee law enforcement, including fleeing to different states and attempting to set up new identities for himself. It was quite interesting to hear the things that he found easy versus the things that caused him difficulties in his attempts to establish his new credentials.==== The Not-So-Good Stuff ===\* By definition, Mitnick is the only source for much of the material in this book. It is therefore difficult to judge just how accurate a picture of his exploits he presents, and I got the feeling he carefully screened which parts of his biography he included. I am an engineer, and much of his discussion at least passed the "sniff" test for being at least plausible.\* The end of the book becomes somewhat self-serving. Mitnick claims to not understand why large companies would put very high values on some of the intellectual property he "just borrowed". I thought he was just being naive, until you realize that he now makes an excellent income because those companies are willing to pay him money to protect those very same assets. Clearly he has some understanding of their value.==== Summary ===I enjoyed the book, and enjoyed reading it. While some of the exploits seemed to stretch what I was willing to believe, it almost doesn't matter. The book was an enjoyable and fun read whether it was fiction or not. One thing that did stick out was that some of Mitnick's greatest successes were not done at a computer, but rather with a telephone talking some lowly employee into bypassing carefully developed security procedures. Finally, I can't help but wonder with the billions we have spent on "security" since 2001, how many of Mitnick's exploits would still work today. I have the awful feeling that I don't really want to know.

For a couple of 4-5 days I couldn't put this book down. 2nd time I've read it. I enjoyed it more the 2nd time for some reason! Kevin Mitnick is easy to relate to if you are a computer person, like hacking/ hacks, fun projects, and knowing forbidden knowledge. Was interesting to learn that he lived in Denver in an area that I did around the same time! Great book, sort of like reading a thriller/mystery except it was real events. Much better than some of the other "I was a teen age hacker" books out there. Hopefully he keeps writing. I really enjoyed learning basic security and

privacy tips, just a fun read overall.

I remember the news stories, I remember the whole "Free Kevin" movement on the web, I remember reading about his release in newspapers and online magazines. It's awesome to read about these events, now, from his perspective. I've read several of the negative comments written about this book, and I don't understand why these people read the book in the first place. They talk about not being able to sympathize, they judge Mitnick for taking advantage of people, they hate Mitnick for the way he exploited his mother and grandmother, they talk bad because they can't understand what drove Mitnick to continue to break into systems, they are irritated because of his cocky attitude. In my opinion, those reviews are more emotional than objective. In common with the people who wrote negative reviews, I too felt bad for his mother, grandmother, friends, him, and everyone he ever used for his criminal activities. I too felt that he had plenty of opportunities to stop and get away clean. I too rolled my eyes when I read about how much smarter he was than everyone else, especially towards the end b/c it'd been ongoing throughout the book. But it's Kevin Mitnick - the social engineer hacker king - Interaction w/ people and mind-screwing most of them is expected, as is the manipulation of relationships in his favor! My 5 stars because: I like (auto)biographies, I am an IT professional, I enjoy narratives - this book was a perfect read for me. I could hardly put it down. It only took me a couple of weeks to read (light reading in evenings and heavier on weekends). I was hooked from the beginning - opening word by Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak. The book contains a few jaw-dropping moments as Mitnick explains how he infiltrated organizations and systems. It was engaging from cover to cover - reading of how he evaded capture, how he ran counter surveillance on the FBI, how he changed identities, and a whole lot more. You'll enjoy this book if you:- are an IT professional- prefer reading crime-drama novels, autobiographies, or fugitive/on-the-run type novels- can handle a subject without hating the subjects (can you appreciate genius in a person regardless of how they use their ability?)

Kevin Mitnick's stories about his black-hat hacking days are mostly for people with some understanding and interest in computers and security. Most of it is details on how he tricked phone company employees into giving up passwords and other info that's supposed to be classified by learning their internal language and acronyms. Very repetitive at times, it could use a bit of editing and probably shouldn't be sold to budding hackers as too much is given away on how to crack back doors.

Similar to The Godfather where you almost root for the criminal, one may find themselves in a similar situation reading this biography. Mitnik's ballsy use 'social engineering' to personally hack info which wasn't electronically available is the most remarkable feat. I sense a near obsessive-compulsive nature in Mitnik's continued hacking at his rivals & the corporate world even as they were closing in, he just couldn't seem to cease, desist and fade away.

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