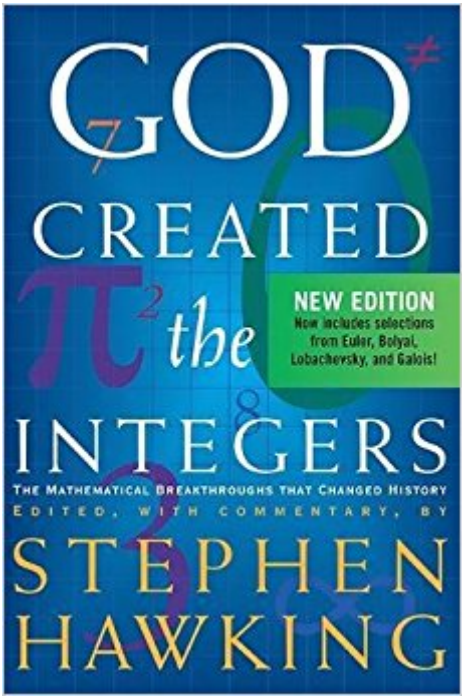
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God Created The Integers: The Mathematical Breakthroughs That Changed History



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Synopsis

Bestselling author and physicist Stephen Hawking explores the "masterpieces" of mathematics, 25 landmarks spanning 2,500 years and representing the work of 15 mathematicians, including Augustin Cauchy, Bernard Riemann, and Alan Turing. This extensive anthology allows readers to peer into the mind of genius by providing them with excerpts from the original mathematical proofs and results. It also helps them understand the progression of mathematical thought, and the very foundations of our present-day technologies. Each chapter begins with a biography of the featured mathematician, clearly explaining the significance of the result, followed by the full proof of the work, reproduced from the original publication.

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Customer Reviews

"God created the integers," wrote mathematician Leopold Kronecker, "All the rest is the work of Man." In this collection of landmark mathematical works, editor Stephen Hawking has assembled the greatest feats humans have ever accomplished using just numbers and their brains. Each of the 17 sections opens with a historical introduction of the featured author, and proceeds to a faithful translation of their most famous work. While most mathematicians will already have complete editions of Isaac Newton’s Principia or Georg Cantor’s Contributions to the Founding of the Theory of Transfinite Numbers, this book is unique in presenting just the best bits of these and other theoretical works. The collection spans 2,500 years and covers a vast range of theories: the parallel postulate, Boolean logic, differential calculus, and the philosophy of the unknowable among them.

Dense with numbers, formulae, and ideas, God Created the Integers is quite challenging, but Hawking rewards curious readers with a look at how mathematics has been built. In contrast to the towering physical edifices of great civilizations of the past, Hawking writes, "The greatest wonder of the modern world is our understanding." --Therese Littleton --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"God created the integers, all the rest is the work of man."

This book is a many-in-one exposition of some of the biggest works in mathematics and it does it well. Kudos to Stephen Hawkings for carefully choosing works that lay out the progression of mathematical ideas for all of us to see. Of course, it does not include all the important works in mathematics...no single book can. What it gives is a reference guide of sorts, a road map of mathematical history with certain markers on the way; these markers are what constitute the chapters of this book. Follow up each of those chapters/works - it will give you plenty to study on if you happen to be genuinely interested in mathematics.However, this property of the book as reference guide is also its main shortcoming: you WILL need to follow up on the works unless you have prior knowledge on the subject matter. Otherwise you will find the works quite puzzling. For example, I did not get heads or tails of what Galois was trying to convey with his seminal work on permutation groups until I read a history on the origins of group theory in the work of Abel. Even more so, you will find Godel's groundbreaking work on logical incompleteness inaccessible without prior knowledge (if not academic background) on mathematical logic and non-naive set theory (Cantor's work as presented is not enough for a background in non-naive set theory. To begin with, it predates even the naive set theory of Frege which is not presented in the book, let alone non-naive set theory which came about later to fix naive set theory).

Not as good as I hoped. I would recommend Stillwell's History of Mathematics much higher. It wasn't clear how much of this work was really Hawking's.

This book is truly a work of art. From his detailed to general knowledge about the history of mathematics, he gives the advanced mathematician an opportunity to see through the eyes of the great. This is not for beginners though. Even around mathematics majors and extremely high level scientists, many flee from the area when I pull this book out. It's thick and intimidating, but if you can sit and read parts of it at a time, it's greatly rewarding.

Overall, this is a fantastic book. The book cover is somewhat misleading. The book was not written by Stephen Hawking and there is no theological argument involved in this history of mathematics. However, the book itself is a joy to read and most enjoyable to those who want another take on the history of mathematics.

I loved this book. It was incredibly interesting and although it did have a lot of typo's, the content is what matters and what I appreciate. As someone who LOVES maths and its history, I highly recommend this book.

This is a awesome compendium of the original proofs from history's greatest mathematical minds. My only lament is the amount of errors in the text. In addition, some of the sentences seems to be abruptly truncated making it difficult to comprehend the proofs. Unfortunately, I cannot find any errata for this book on the publisher's site. For now, I keep jumping to wikipedia to understand the correct proof!

bought for the wife, she really needed this book!

This is an excellent masterpiece in writing and perfect in logical development and gives a reader a perspective to envision the progress of the sciences through the prism of the history of mathematics. Dr.G., Naples, FL.

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