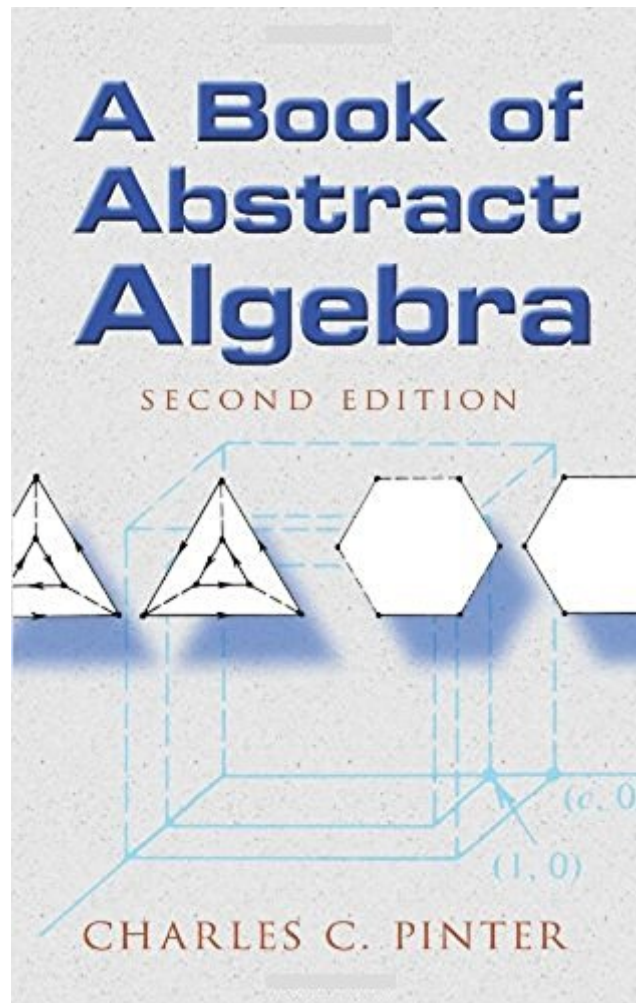


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A Book Of Abstract Algebra: Second Edition



Synopsis

Accessible but rigorous, this outstanding text encompasses all of the topics covered by a typical course in elementary abstract algebra. Its easy-to-read treatment offers an intuitive approach, featuring informal discussions followed by thematically arranged exercises. Intended for undergraduate courses in abstract algebra, it is suitable for junior- and senior-level math majors and future math teachers. This second edition features additional exercises to improve student familiarity with applications. An introductory chapter traces concepts of abstract algebra from their historical roots. Succeeding chapters avoid the conventional format of definition-theorem-proof-corollary-example; instead, they take the form of a discussion with students, focusing on explanations and offering motivation. Each chapter rests upon a central theme, usually a specific application or use. The author provides elementary background as needed and discusses standard topics in their usual order. He introduces many advanced and peripheral subjects in the plentiful exercises, which are accompanied by ample instruction and commentary and offer a wide range of experiences to students at different levels of ability.

Book Information

File Size: 13949 KB

Print Length: 400 pages

Publisher: Dover Reprints; 2nd edition (March 28, 2015)

Publication Date: March 28, 2015

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00VDGA1JA

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #53,114 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #1 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Science > Mathematics > Pure Mathematics > Algebra > Abstract #5 in Books > Science & Math > Mathematics > Pure Mathematics > Algebra > Abstract

Customer Reviews

Each class I've taken as a grad student, I've gone a little overboard buying all sorts of books on the

subject matter. I like that each author has a unique style and approach. In abstract algebra, there are the standards (Dummit, Hungerford, etc). These are the more down-and-dirty texts. They're good. They're thorough. They're rigorous. They do the job quite well if you already have some familiarity with the subject. Then there are the older, cheaper books, like Deskins. It's alright. Some people nay-say it, but whatever: it's cheap and is one more voice to add to the choir. Pinter, though, reads like a novel---and not in a cheesy way. As I waited for a friend in Barnes and Noble, I half-heartedly picked it up to skim through it... The introduction hooked me--it sums up what lies ahead like a movie trailer, leaving one mad to find out the whole story. Some might shrug this book off as a lowly "undergraduate" book, but if this is the case, you're missing out on the one author who has been able to deftly convey just how inspiring this subject really is. No other book has convinced me of the power of abstract algebra like this book. Will it be the only book you read on the subject? If it is, then it was a good choice. Having experience with the more standard tomes out there, there is the chance that I think this reads like a novel and is "so good" because I am familiar with the material. But, seriously, this is the kind of book that you're lucky to stumble across, whoever you are: a math nerd, physics geek, bio dweeb, or chem freak. This book will, at the least, open your eyes to well-kept secrets of higher mathematics.

This is an excellent book on abstract algebra that makes the transition into this difficult area as painless as possible. As an engineer who was forced to learn group theory, I read through at least 50 books on this subject (another good choice is *Groups and Their Graphs* by Grossman) and Pinter's treatment was the most user friendly treatment I came across. I have no doubt that most physicists and applied scientists would also love the style of this book. However, ivory tower mathematics types might put their nose up at the way Pinter develops the material. Specifically, this book goes to great lengths to show the scaffolding behind the ideas and proofs. Concrete examples and toy problems are given without apology. As a result, the mathematics is brought alive and not depicted as cold and detached theorem proving. This book actually is a perfect response to the snobby elitism exuded by many advanced math texts. Overall, this book is a model of good mathematics textbook writing. My highest recommendation.

This book starts with an historical chapter which not only provides the history of abstract algebra, but also offers a perspective along the lines of "Why would anyone want to do this at all? What good is it for anything?" The book then offers a very step-by-step, each idea carefully explained approach to the subject. Each chapter ends with multiple exercises which show applications as well as theory.

The problems themselves are broken into steps or stages, for those of us who are not experienced with theoretical math. Some of the problems are solved at the back of the book (though I wish more were solved). The level of the proofs in the book is excellent for someone like myself with a background in applied math, but not much by way of theoretical math. No steps are skipped, everything is spelled out. For a college or university that likes to really "challenge" its students with books that race through the material, or pack the material very densely, some professors might find this book too easy. But for a school that wants to make sure everyone can keep up -- and also for self-study as I'm doing -- I highly recommend this textbook. The only thing I wish they'd add in a future edition are more solutions to the problems, and also a glossary of symbols and terms.

When I first learned that the general quintic polynomial equation was insolvable by radicals, such a counter-intuitive idea, I wanted to learn Abstract Algebra primarily to understand it, and when I took Abstract Algebra in college they bombarded me with a "completist" agenda whereby it seemed they tried to teach everything there was to know about group theory, instead of just what was relevant to prove truly remarkable results. So, I was disappointed. That's also my complaint with most Abstract Algebra textbooks. Then, when I found this book, I was excited, because I was able to learn all the essentials I needed to understand the insolubility of the quintic. After this book proves that remarkable result, it ends, and that's what I love about this book. If you're looking for a completist treatment of Abstract Algebra, consider Dummit and Foote, what I used in college. But, if you're primarily interested in a very lucid, accessible, yet intricate proof of the insolubility of the quintic, then by all means buy this book! Sure, there are other tangential topics in exercises, an optional chapter, and sprinkled throughout but these are usually indicated as such and don't obtrude the main inquiry. Other remarkable results treated in this book are the impossibility of certain compass and straight-edge constructions that tormented geometers for over two thousand years. There are a few typos in this book, but you'll always be able to figure out what the author means. So, definitely pick up this wonderful book! I can't recommend it more! I've been re-reading it for months now!

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