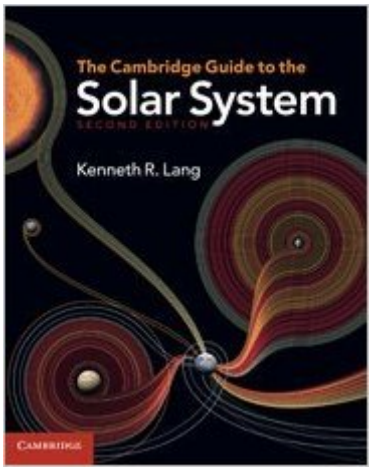
The Cambridge Guide To The Solar System



Synopsis

Richly illustrated with full-color images, this book is a comprehensive, up-to-date description of the planets, their moons, and recent exoplanet discoveries. This second edition of a now classic reference is brought up to date with fascinating new discoveries from 12 recent Solar System missions. Examples include water on the Moon, volcanism on Mercury's previously unseen half, vast buried glaciers on Mars, geysers on Saturn's moon Enceladus, lakes of hydrocarbons on Titan, encounter with asteroid Itokawa, and sample return from comet Wild 2. The book is further enhanced by hundreds of striking new images of the planets and moons. Written at an introductory level appropriate for undergraduate and high-school students, it provides fresh insights that appeal to anyone with an interest in planetary science. A website hosted by the author contains all the images in the book with an overview of their importance. A link to this can be found at www.cambridge.org/solarsystem.

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Customer Reviews

This book is written in a clear and easy to read style. If you are a novice on astronomy you will still be able to understand the text. At the same time this book offers enough in-depth and up-to-date information to satisfy the person who is more knowledgeable on the subject. The text is richly illustrated, with a multitude of photographs, charts, schematics, drawings etc.The first three chapters of the book deal with general subjects like the history of astronomy, the forming of impact craters, the principles of volcanism in the solar system, the (presumed) existence of water on several solar

objects, the characteristics of atmospheres of planets and Titan etc. etc. After this there are separate chapters about the earth, our moon, the asteroids, comets and all planets. Unexpectedly, although understandable in view of their similarities, Uranus and Neptune are put together in one chapter. Even more peculiar is the fact that there is not a separate chapter about Pluto and its companion Charon. They are described in four pages in one of the general chapters. So Pluto is not treated as a real planet but more as an object of the Kuiper-belt. The last chapter of the book is called "Worlds colliding" and deals with the impact in 1994 of comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 into Jupiter, collisions of comets with the sun, existing impact craters on earth and the chances of disaster by incoming asteroids/meteoroids.All in all I find this a very nice book that should appeal to both beginners in the field as to the more knowledgeable "amateur-astronomers" among us. In this way it is a "well balanced" book.

although this is an extensive and comprehensive guide to the solar system as understood in modern science, there are several editorial errors which let the publication down; the example that springs to mind is the mistake made in kepler's third law, written as PÃ Â = aÃ Â , which should read PÃ Â = aÃ Â ; maybe nitpicking, but its a pretty bad error and there are others at several points which are misleading for anyone trying to understand the scientific model by which we explain the workings of our solar system. shame, because otherwise it has alot of information and is easily understandable.

This is a hugely informative compendium of current knowledge of our solar system. Included is up-to-date science, compiled from the missions of all the modern spacecraft, of all (make that most) of the planets plus all of their known moons; plus comets, asteroids, solar winds, magnetic fields, and everything else present in the solar system. A bonus is found in the beginning chapters of the book, which present the history of astronomical discovery by earthbound explorers, and also a large chapter on Earth itself. Included are informative treatises on the Earth's geology, topology, and atmosphere, setting up equally fascinating examinations of those topics on the other planets. Thus we get up-to-date and in-depth coverage of everything from the bizarre volcanoes of Venus to the encrusted oceans of Europa to the pink smog of Titan. Just watch out for some sneaky politics in the chapter on the Earth, as coverage of atmospheric changes leads to some not wholly appropriate comments on the political side of global warming. And while the book is uniformly fascinating and informative, one humbug for me is a nearly complete lack of coverage for Pluto. This is likely because we haven't yet been able to send a spacecraft there, and also because the creators of this

book have followed the currently accepted scientific theory of Pluto as a non-planet that doesn't deserve the attention of the "real" planets. (In fact, Pluto is actually missing from the book's lists of planets of the solar system). Come on, cut the little guy some slack already! [~doomsdayer520~]

The content of the book is interesting and informative. It's written at a level that would be readable by most high school or college undergraduate students, but with a great deal of information.I'm thinking that this copy must have sat on a shelf somewhere for a few years. While it hasn't happened yet, I think the binding will eventually crack.

This book presents an excellent overview of our knowledge about the Solar System. The planets, their moons, asteroids and meteorites, Kuiper belt objects, and some information about exoplanets are presented. Many high-quality illustrations are present.

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