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DISCOVERING THE ESSENTIAL UNIVERSE BY NEIL F. COMINS PDF

Neil Comins' *Discovering the Universe* confronts the challenges of the one-term astronomy course by heightening student curiosities about the cosmos, by using the context of astronomy to teach the process of science, and by highlighting common misconceptions and showing students how to think their way past them.

With its signature combination of vivid writing and spectacular images, the new edition offers new findings, new study help, and an expanded new media/supplements package centered on W.H. Freeman's breakthrough online course space, LaunchPad.

See what's in the LaunchPad

- Sales Rank: #10665 in Books
- Published on: 2014-12-22
- Original language: English
- Dimensions: 10.96" h x .77" w x 9.16" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 448 pages

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Good textbook on various Astronomy. Free Starry Nights software so so

By Thomas Erickson

As an amateur astronomer of 40 years I bought this used book as a backup book for my observatory for our astronomy club members and my family to use. William J. Kaufmann and Neil F. Comins wrote a very good book. Easy to read and lots of great questions for the astronomy student to tackle. William has a good style that reads well, not super advanced technical that would be very good for a senior high school student or freshman college course. Some math and formulas but not too difficult.

Lots of great pictures. The book keeps your interest and makes you want to read more as you learn each topic. I liked the astronomers toolbox where specific astronomy tools and formulas to compute various equations. Also in the back is a great appendix listing data on the planets and their satellites as well as the nearest and visually brightest stars....a great quick reference.

Some of the various topics discussed (There are more) are *Discovering astronomy*, *Discovering the night sky*, *Earthly cycles*, *Eclipses*, *Gravitation*, *Origins of the Sun centered universe*, *Kepler's and Newton's Laws* (done very well and important!), *Light and telescopes*, *Optics and telescopes*, *Radio Astronomy*, *Spectra*, *Atoms*, *The Solar System*, *The evolution of stars and their life cycles*, *galaxies*, *quasars*, *The expanding universe vs. the steady state*. This is only a partial selection. The authors wrote much more and covered all

the important bases. A great read for the average layman without getting too technical. As I said great for a senior high school student or college student taking astronomy 101.

I checked out the supplied free Starry Nights Discovering The Universe Software 5.0 software. It loaded well on my MS Vista laptop. However I was not impressed with it. Not able to get full screen Messier objects, galaxies, clusters and planets all at one time. I know this is the freebie software and you can get the upgrade Starry Night Pro for \$59 on line. I like my Sky 6 Bisque planetarium software much better.

The newer edition is probably better with updates and more info on newer found exoplanets. This older edition at low cost is fine as a backup reference book and a book for students to answer both regular and more advanced astronomy questions. Would of given 5 stars but the free software was just so so...maybe 3 stars tops. Together the package 4 stars. Try to get the later edition at low cost. If not able to, this older edition is fine as much of the material is still good and will not change. Maybe more information needed on new exoplanets. A good backup observatory book and study guide. 4 stars and recommended.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Love this book

By Elf Herelf

Love this book, very insightful, well introduced for me to understand. I grew a unique interest in Astronomy as it is very down to earth in breaking down the terminology and understanding of the universe and it's planets.

It's not boring, nor is it difficult to understand. The review questions at the end of every chapter help you retain the information more for future exams.

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Great Astronomy book, no longer includes CD

By Russ

This was the assigned text for a college Astronomy class I took. I really enjoy the book. It is well written, easy to read, yet provides a lot of information. It's a rare college text that is actually interesting to just sit down and read and flip through. Great photography and illustrations throughout. I will be keeping this book for personal reference.

One note: Older reviews say the book comes with a CD that includes an electronic copy of the book and/or StarryNight software. The 2014 (10th edition) paperback does not come with any CD but if you look carefully inside the book's Preface you can find a the companion web site which includes some extra slides, flashcards, quizzes, star charts, etc. The book also says you can request a download key for StarryNight but I haven't figure out how/where you are supposed to do that yet. An electronic copy of the book is not included anymore and you'd have to buy the premium electronic textbook as far as I can tell.

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