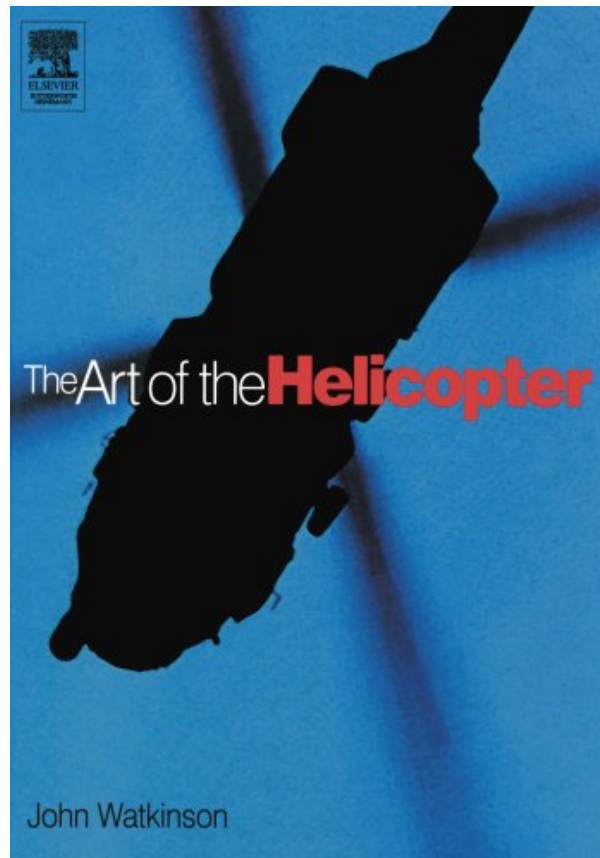
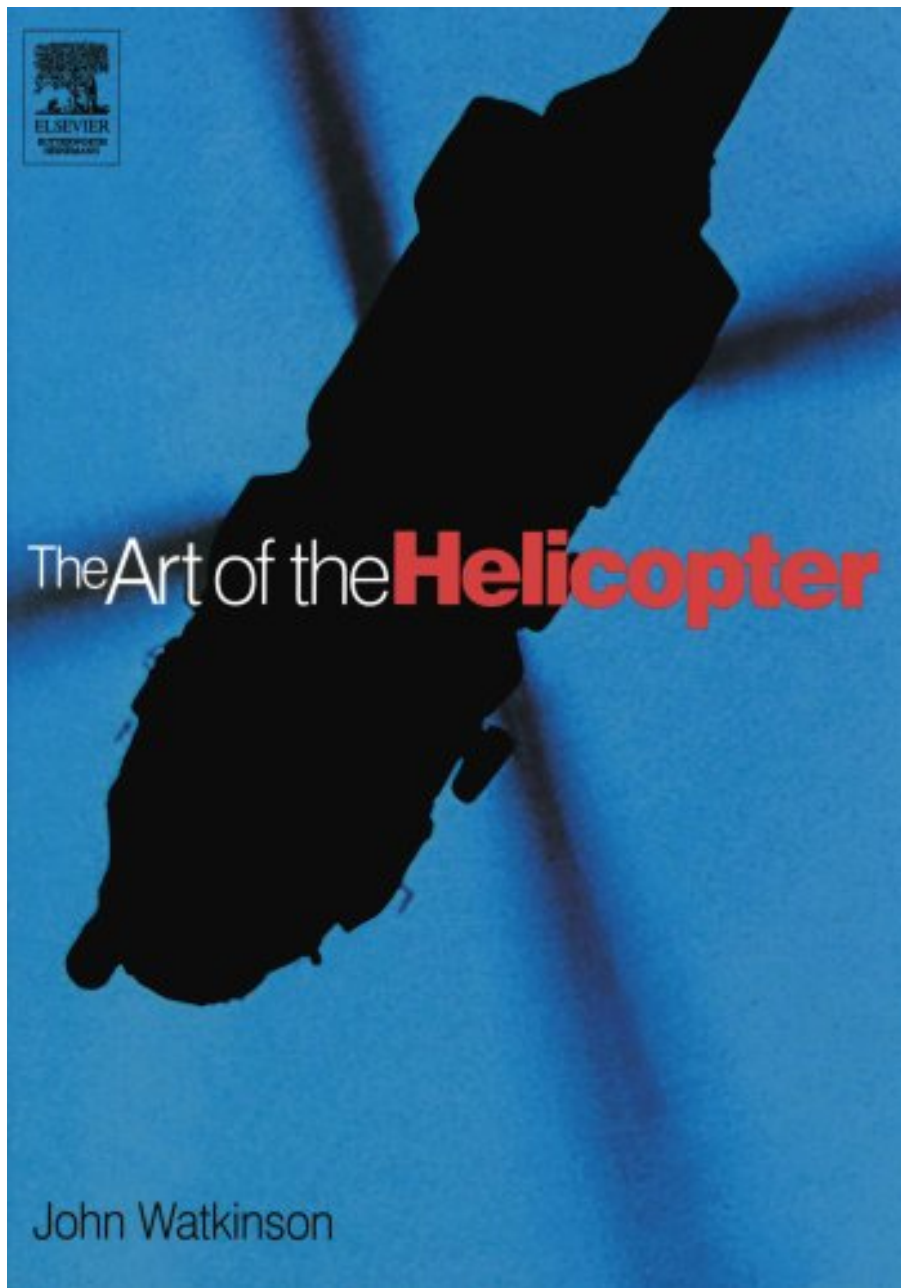


# THE ART OF THE HELICOPTER BY JOHN WATKINSON



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## Review

"The theory and dynamics of helicopter flight are complex and for the uninitiated, difficult. But in this book, British helicopter pilot and technical author John Watkinson sets out to simplify the concepts, and explain in lay-man's terms how a helicopter operates. Using photographs and over 400 diagrams, all aspects of rotary flight are covered including the history of rotor-craft, helicopter dynamics, rotors, tails, power plants and control. This is an excellent book for any helicopter enthusiast." Airforce, Fall 2004

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## About the Author

John Watkinson is an independent international consultant in advanced applications of electronics to audiovisual and avionics systems. He is a Fellow of the AES, a member of the Society of Expert Witnesses, and the British Computer Society and is a chartered information systems practitioner. He presents lectures, seminars and training courses worldwide. He is the author of many other Elsevier books, including The Art of DigitalVideo, An Introduction to Digital Video, Convergence in Broadcast and Communications Media, Television Fundamentals and The Art of the Helicopter.

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The modern helicopter is a sophisticated device which merges a surprising number of technologies together. This wide range of disciplines is one of the fascinations of the helicopter, but it is also makes a complete understanding difficult. Those searching for an understanding of the helicopter will find *The Art of the Helicopter* invaluable. John Watkinson approaches every subject associated with the helicopter from first principles and builds up in a clearly explained logical sequence using plain English and clear diagrams, avoiding unnecessary mathematics. Technical terms and buzzwords are defined and acronyms are spelled out. Misnomers, myths and old wives tales (for there are plenty surrounding helicopters) are disposed of. Whilst the contents of the book are expressed in straightforward language there is no oversimplification and the content is based on established physics and accepted theory. The student of helicopter technology or aerodynamics will find here a concise introduction leading naturally to more advanced textbooks on the subject.

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The only single volume book to cover all the aspects of helicopter design, manufacture and performance, written for pilots and students

Most helpful customer reviews

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

The Touchstone Work

By JDF

For me, this is quite simply the only book that has managed to explain the more complicated subjects in a concise manner. It makes no initial assumptions - even seemingly prosaic topics such as center of mass, kinetic energy, and gravity are given enlightening treatment. Watkinson's writing style is very self-conscious; he knows when he has made a statement that will require support, and then he provides that support. It's old-school "burden of proof" at work - no arguments from authority. Each topic is presented with substantive real-world data. If you (e.g.) care to know why helicopters are prone to vibration, you have pages of diagrams detailing basebands, sidebands, harmonics, etc.

You will probably find this book a great long-term reference when you want the deeper answers or are someone who wants to know *\*why\** everything works and not simply be handed the answer for later regurgitation. It also contains more information that one person could absorb in a year of study, and it is indeed heavy reading. Probably not a good intro book for most people, but something special to keep on your shelf and return to over the years when you need the definitive treatment. I mainly reference this book when I encounter topics in preparation for my pilot's license that are inadequately explained in the required literature. I also own Wagtendonk's "Principles of Helicopter Flight", and despite its positive reviews on Amazon, I find myself re-reading various paragraphs multiple times to get the meaning. I'm currently reading the chapter on horsepower and rate/angle of climb in Principles of Helicopter Flight, and find myself stopping to consult Watkinson's book for a more structured explanation. Since many people also own Wagtendonk's book, I would say the difference is that Wagtendonk "tells" you, while Watkinson "shows" you - if you've got the time!

Warning: this book will fly in the face of most pilot exam preparation materials as it is exhaustive and wastes no time dispelling common myths. For example, Watkinson spends but a few sentences on the mechanics of lift, showing how it is a consequence of Newton's 3rd and not having anything to do with Bernoulli, "half a venturi tube" or any of the other well-meaning but erroneous explanations still being taught in FAA manuals and beyond (see <https://www.grc.nasa.gov/www/k-12/airplane/bernnew.html> for the *\*correct\** myth-busting explanation of lift by NASA). This skeptical and rigorously empirical approach could cause problems if you're simply looking to give the "right" answer on a multiple choice exam!

One last thing - the book's lexical style is not for everyone - I would suggest you read the sample pages to make sure Watkinson's rather academic style is palatable for you. It's UK English and may seem too "textbook-ish" for some people. On the other hand, the more science-minded will probably get really excited - YMMV ;)

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

The Art of the Helicopter

By Michael Reichel

Reply to Mr Ferguson

There is no misunderstanding. Watkinson is correct. In fact the entire book is a very refreshing insight into a subject that at times is being opinionated by a great deal of quasi-science. As a pilot I find I often return to further my knowledge and get explanations to statements in other helicopter books and literature that do not

make sense. Further, Watkinson is not a journalist, he is a writer and has more than 20 books over the last 15 years. Whilst being a Renaissance man - a person that has expertise, insight and with great wisdom moves across multiple disciplines finding the common universal laws that apply to them, he is highly respected by the selfappointed Gurus in the film/television business and often sought out to answer their queries. The book in question is a good example of his cross-disciplinary insights as it describes phenomenon using impedances, very common to the electrical engineer. Watkinson also was a helicopter pilot and even has patents pertaining to this discipline. Specifically, on the subject of energies, they all are so fundamental ever since Sir Isaac made them clear to the rest of us. They are natures true laws and I am immensely thankful that nobody can break them. This book is highly recommended and deserves becoming a reference work, it has got all the ingredients for this.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Rating

By Joe Lautier

Has excellent technical descriptions of the various systems. Would assist anyone wishing to deepen thier knowledge of the operating characteristics of theses machines.

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