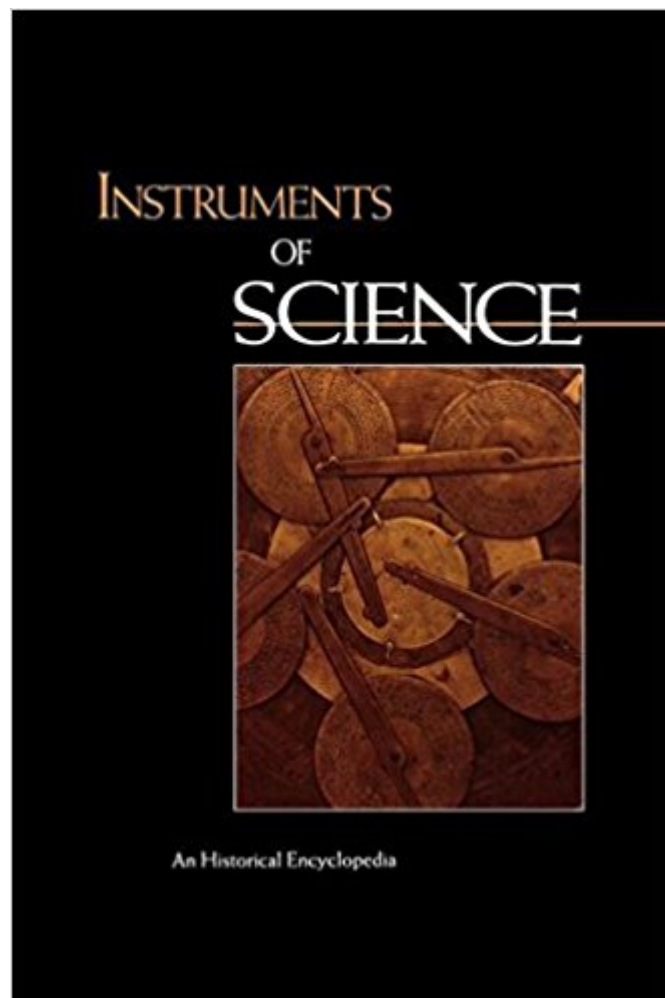




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Instruments Of Science: An Historical Encyclopedia (Garland Encyclopedias In The History Of Science)



Synopsis

This authoritative reference covers 325 scientific instruments ranging from antiquity to the present, and from the mundane to the highly sophisticated. Entries explain how they work and trace their invention, development, distribution and use. Fully illustrated and complete with bibliographies, it will be particularly useful to students and scholars of modern science and technology. Reflecting contemporary practice, it examines instruments used for testing and monitoring, as well as those used for research, and even considers a number of widely used laboratory organisms (such as drosophila and e.coli) as instruments.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"This scholarly resource is an important contribution to the literature of the history of science, providing descriptions of many instruments that are overlooked in other books."-"Booklist "The first reference book to address the immense historical range of instruments and also the first to consider application, innovation, and costs. Its emphasis on twentieth-century devices and disciplines makes it especially valuable to students and scholars of modern science and technology, and the beauty of some of the antique instruments makes it a valuable guide for collectors, dealers, and curators."-"The Chemical Educator "The editors state: "This volume is intended to communicate clearly to a wide audience." This goal has been achieved, as the work is very readable, with little specialized jargon. This encyclopedia comes highly recommended, especially for

academic/research or large public libraries. In addition, anyone who has an interest in the subject would benefit. And the price is modest for an illustrated 700-page reference book."-"E-Streams "This book will be of greatest value to students of the history of science. The short bibliography at the end of each subject is useful, and in many cases one of the reference works cited was written by the contributor...."-"Nature ... "it is hard to put down once you've started reading. It is an excellent reference work that should find a place on the shelves of all science and technology museums and libraries.."-"Rittenhouse, December 1999

This authoritative work on the history of scientific instruments brings together information from hundreds of primary sources and specialized studies in many languages. Written by 223 scientists, instrument designers, and historians, the Encyclopedia's 327 entries cover instruments from the beginnings of science to the present day and explore devices designed for cutting-edge research as well as routine testing. Each entry explains how a device works, how it is used, who developed it, and shows what it looks like. The Encyclopedia is the first reference work to address the great historical range of instruments and is also the first to consider applications, innovations, and costs. Because of its focus on 20th-century devices and disciplines, its coverage is particularly valuable to students and scholars of modern science and technology.

Great book

great for reading before bed.

For anyone interested in the history of science this is a must. Some really obscure instruments and their history and use. I've found it useful teaching freshman biology/chemistry showing how science is actually done and how we moved into the 21st century. Highly recommended.

I choose this book because i collect these kind of instrumentsI also like second hand booksThis was in good shape.Thankx

One has to celebrate the publication of a book like this, because of the scarcity of the information available on this subject. The book is relatively big (709 p.), more expensive than big (\$150) and of course has quite an amount of interesting information. But it is probably as important to highlight its shortcomings, which show how much remains to be done. I do not pretend to do a general review,

for which I am not qualified and that is quite impossible in a work of encyclopedic pretense like this one. I will restrain my commentary mainly to the treatment of the field of electricity and magnetism, which I suppose has its importance in scientific instrumentation and does not lack in amount and variety of instruments by itself. Its reflection in this book is very unfair and inadequate, in my opinion. All the entries that begin with "Electricity-Electrostatic" span a mere 20 pages, 7 of which are dedicated to medical applications (electrocardiograph, electroencephalograph, electromyograph and electroretinograph, to be precise). One will search in vain, on the contrary, for any mention to the electron tube, or valve, or thermionic device. The totality of what the editors and the authors have to say about radio waves and related topics is included under the clumsy entry of "Radio Wave Detector". Here the whole history of electromagnetism and of radio is dispatched in little more than one page, including all its apparatuses and "science". In this egregious page one finds the only mention I have been able to locate to the "thermionic diode" and the "triode", but not one reference to galena or silicon or germanium. Coils, resistors, resonance, oscillators or quartz crystals are not even mentioned per se. The arbitrariness of the selection of voices and of the espace allocated to individual items is reflected in the fact that "oscilloscope" , for a contrary instance, has an entry for itself of a full page and a half. Under the entry "Current meter" it is only spoken about devices to measure water flows. Another example of what I consider a total lack of perspective could be the fact that almost 10 pages are devoted to several types of compass, whereas the whole subject of clocks is dispatched in 5 pages. The editors try to explain in the Introduction how they have managed to handle the question of What is a Scientific Instrument? The explanation is not very clear and the results reflect this. Whereas it is probably fashionable among historians of science and museum curators to consider "Escherichia coli" as a "scientific instrument", this kind of boutades and trade jokes should not justify the lack of rigour in the treatment of what are, and have always been, undeniable instruments of science. The book is a conglomerate of fair individual cards, but nobody seems to have taken care of the equilibrium of the whole file. For having so many illustrious authors, the work is quite poor, superficial and deceiving. Cross-references are practically nonexistent and the main index is of no much help unfortunately for bridging the lacunae, being for the most part a mere reproduction of the entries of a work that is by itself alphabetically ordered. The typography, printing and other production aspects of the book are of good quality.

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