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"How many people in the world are picking their nose right now? Weinstein and Adam 'guesstimate' the answer to this problem and 79 others, covering chemistry, physics, biology and history. The book is a

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'Guesstimation' | plus.maths.org

"Dr. Adam and his colleague Lawrence Weinstein, a professor of physics, offer a wide and often amusing assortment of Fermi flexes in a book that just caught my eye, Guesstimation: Solving the World's Problems on the Back of a Cocktail Napkin."--Natalie Angier, New York Times "An important skill of great use ... is the ability to derive an approximate result from insufficient data.

Guesstimation: Solving the World's Problems on the Back of ...

Guesstimation: Solving the World's Problems on the Back of a Cocktail Napkin Paperback – Illustrated, 21 April 2008 by Lawrence Weinstein (Author)

Guesstimation: Solving the World's Problems on the Back of ...

Guesstimation : Solving the World's Problems on the Back of a Cocktail Napkin by Lawrence Weinstein

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1 May 2008

Guesstimation: Solving the World's Problems on the Back of...

Lawrence Weinstein is University Professor of Physics at Old Dominion University. He is the coauthor of *Guesstimation: Solving the World's Problems on the Back of a Cocktail Napkin* (Princeton). Patricia Edwards is senior lecturer in art at Old Dominion University.

Guesstimation 2.0 | Princeton University Press

Weinstein and Adam 'guesstimate' the answer to this problem and 79 others, covering chemistry, physics, biology and history. The book is a step-by-step guide to problem-solving using rough-and-ready maths, the kind done on the back of a cocktail napkin.

Guesstimation – Solving the World's Problems on the Back ...

As 85% of Sierra Leone remains unconnected to the national electricity grid, the country's solar power providers have jumped on an opportunity to bridge the gap in the last five years. CNN's Eleni ...

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anything--quickly--using plausible assumptions and elementary arithmetic. Lawrence Weinstein and John Adam present an eclectic array of estimation problems that range from devilishly simple to quite sophisticated and from serious real-world concerns to downright silly ones. How long would it take a running faucet to fill the inverted dome of the Capitol? What is the total length of all the pickles consumed in the US in one year? What are the relative merits of internal-combustion and electric cars, of coal and nuclear energy? The problems are marvelously diverse, yet the skills to solve them are the same. The authors show how easy it is to derive useful ballpark estimates by breaking complex problems into simpler, more manageable ones--and how there can be many paths to the right answer. The book is written in a question-and-answer format with lots of hints along the way. It includes a handy appendix summarizing the few formulas and basic science concepts needed, and its small size and French-fold design make it conveniently portable. Illustrated with humorous pen-and-ink sketches, Guesstimation will delight popular-math enthusiasts and is ideal for the classroom.

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Simple and effective techniques for quickly estimating virtually anything Guesstimation 2.0 reveals the simple and effective techniques needed to estimate virtually anything—quickly—and illustrates them using an eclectic array of problems. A stimulating follow-up to Guesstimation, this is the must-have book for anyone preparing for a job interview in technology or finance, where more and more leading businesses test applicants using estimation questions just like these. The ability to guesstimate on your feet is an essential skill to have in today's world, whether you're trying to distinguish between a billion-dollar subsidy and a trillion-dollar stimulus, a megawatt wind turbine and a gigawatt nuclear plant, or parts-per-million and parts-per-billion contaminants. Lawrence Weinstein begins with a concise tutorial on how to solve these kinds of order of magnitude problems, and then invites readers to have a go themselves. The book features dozens of problems along with helpful hints and easy-to-understand solutions. It also includes appendixes containing useful formulas and more. Guesstimation 2.0 shows how to estimate everything from how closely you can orbit a neutron star without being pulled apart by gravity, to the fuel used to transport your food from the farm to the store, to the total length of all toilet paper used in the United States. It also enables readers to answer, once and for all, the most asked environmental

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question of our day: paper or plastic?

An antidote to mathematical rigor mortis, teaching how to guess answers without needing a proof or an exact calculation. In problem solving, as in street fighting, rules are for fools: do whatever works—don't just stand there! Yet we often fear an unjustified leap even though it may land us on a correct result. Traditional mathematics teaching is largely about solving exactly stated problems exactly, yet life often hands us partly defined problems needing only moderately accurate solutions. This engaging book is an antidote to the rigor mortis brought on by too much mathematical rigor, teaching us how to guess answers without needing a proof or an exact calculation. In *Street-Fighting Mathematics*, Sanjoy Mahajan builds, sharpens, and demonstrates tools for educated guessing and down-and-dirty, opportunistic problem solving across diverse fields of knowledge—from mathematics to management. Mahajan describes six tools: dimensional analysis, easy cases, lumping, picture proofs, successive approximation, and reasoning by analogy. Illustrating each tool with numerous examples, he carefully separates the tool—the general principle—from the particular application so that the reader can most easily grasp the tool itself to use on problems of particular interest. *Street-Fighting Mathematics* grew out of a short course taught by the author at MIT for students ranging from first-year undergraduates to graduate students ready for careers in physics, mathematics, management, electrical engineering, computer science, and biology. They benefited from an approach that avoided rigor and taught them how to use mathematics to solve real problems. *Street-Fighting Mathematics* will appear in print and online under a Creative Commons Noncommercial Share Alike license.

From an award-winning teacher, “a delightful and instructive accessory to an introductory physics

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course” (Physics World). Physicists use “back-of-the-envelope” estimates to check whether or not an idea could possibly be right. In many cases, the approximate solution is all that is needed. This compilation of 101 examples of back-of-the-envelope calculations celebrates a quantitative approach to solving physics problems. Drawing on a lifetime of physics research and nearly three decades as the editor of *The Physics Teacher*, Clifford Swartz—a winner of two awards from the American Association of Physics Teachers—provides simple, approximate solutions to physics problems that span a broad range of topics. What note do you get when you blow across the top of a Coke bottle? Could you lose weight on a diet of ice cubes? How can a fakir lie on a bed of nails without getting hurt? Does draining water in the northern hemisphere really swirl in a different direction than its counterpart below the equator? In each case, only a few lines of arithmetic and a few natural constants solve a problem to within a few percent. Covering such subjects as astronomy, magnetism, optics, sound, heat, mechanics, waves, and electricity, this book provides a rich source of material for teachers and anyone interested in the physics of everyday life. “This is a book that will help make the study of physics fun and relevant.” —Mark P. Silverman, author of *Waves and Grains: Reflections on Light and Learning*

From rainbows, river meanders, and shadows to spider webs, honeycombs, and the markings on animal coats, the visible world is full of patterns that can be described mathematically. Examining such readily observable phenomena, this book introduces readers to the beauty of nature as revealed by mathematics and the beauty of mathematics as revealed in nature. Generously illustrated, written in an informal style, and replete with examples from everyday life, *Mathematics in Nature* is an excellent and undaunting introduction to the ideas and methods of mathematical modeling. It illustrates how mathematics can be used to formulate and solve puzzles observed in nature and to interpret the solutions. In the process, it

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teaches such topics as the art of estimation and the effects of scale, particularly what happens as things get bigger. Readers will develop an understanding of the symbiosis that exists between basic scientific principles and their mathematical expressions as well as a deeper appreciation for such natural phenomena as cloud formations, halos and glories, tree heights and leaf patterns, butterfly and moth wings, and even puddles and mud cracks. Developed out of a university course, this book makes an ideal supplemental text for courses in applied mathematics and mathematical modeling. It will also appeal to mathematics educators and enthusiasts at all levels, and is designed so that it can be dipped into at leisure.

nature.

What does quilting have to do with electric circuit theory? The answer is just one of the fascinating ways that best-selling popular math writer Paul Nahin illustrates the deep interplay of math and physics in the world around us in his latest book of challenging mathematical puzzles, *Mrs. Perkins's Electric Quilt*. With his trademark combination of intriguing mathematical problems and the historical anecdotes surrounding them, Nahin invites readers on an exciting and informative exploration of some of the many ways math and physics combine to create something vastly more powerful, useful, and interesting than either is by itself. In a series of brief and largely self-contained chapters, Nahin discusses a wide range of topics in which math and physics are mutually dependent and mutually illuminating, from Newtonian gravity and Newton's laws of mechanics to ballistics, air drag, and electricity. The mathematical subjects range from algebra, trigonometry, geometry, and calculus to differential equations, Fourier series, and theoretical and Monte Carlo probability. Each chapter includes problems--some three dozen in all--that

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challenge readers to try their hand at applying what they have learned. Just as in his other books of mathematical puzzles, Nahin discusses the historical background of each problem, gives many examples, includes MATLAB codes, and provides complete and detailed solutions at the end. Mrs. Perkins's Electric Quilt will appeal to students interested in new math and physics applications, teachers looking for unusual examples to use in class--and anyone who enjoys popular math books.

Tools to make hard problems easier to solve. In this book, Sanjoy Mahajan shows us that the way to master complexity is through insight rather than precision. Precision can overwhelm us with information, whereas insight connects seemingly disparate pieces of information into a simple picture. Unlike computers, humans depend on insight. Based on the author's fifteen years of teaching at MIT, Cambridge University, and Olin College, *The Art of Insight in Science and Engineering* shows us how to build insight and find understanding, giving readers tools to help them solve any problem in science and engineering. To master complexity, we can organize it or discard it. *The Art of Insight in Science and Engineering* first teaches the tools for organizing complexity, then distinguishes the two paths for discarding complexity: with and without loss of information. Questions and problems throughout the text help readers master and apply these groups of tools. Armed with this three-part toolchest, and without complicated mathematics, readers can estimate the flight range of birds and planes and the strength of chemical bonds, understand the physics of pianos and xylophones, and explain why skies are blue and sunsets are red. *The Art of Insight in Science and Engineering* will appear in print and online under a Creative Commons Noncommercial Share Alike license.

What mathematical modeling uncovers about life in the city X and the City, a book of diverse and

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accessible math-based topics, uses basic modeling to explore a wide range of entertaining questions about urban life. How do you estimate the number of dental or doctor's offices, gas stations, restaurants, or movie theaters in a city of a given size? How can mathematics be used to maximize traffic flow through tunnels? Can you predict whether a traffic light will stay green long enough for you to cross the intersection? And what is the likelihood that your city will be hit by an asteroid? Every math problem and equation in this book tells a story and examples are explained throughout in an informal and witty style. The level of mathematics ranges from precalculus through calculus to some differential equations, and any reader with knowledge of elementary calculus will be able to follow the materials with ease. There are also some more challenging problems sprinkled in for the more advanced reader. Filled with interesting and unusual observations about how cities work, *X and the City* shows how mathematics undergirds and plays an important part in the metropolitan landscape.

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