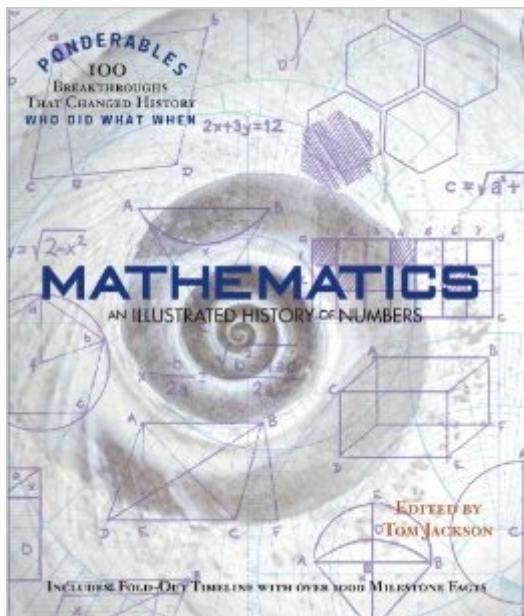


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# Mathematics An Illustrated History Of Numbers (100 Ponderables)



## Synopsis

Legend has it that the first magic square, where all lines and diagonals add up to the same figure, was revealed more than 2,000 years ago when a river turtle appeared to have ancient Chinese numerals inscribed on sections of its shell. Patterns are everywhere in nature, and counting, measuring, and calculating changes are as old as civilization itself, as are many of the theorems and laws of math. The Pythagorean Theorem was used to plot out fields for planting crops before the ancient Greek Pythagoras was even born, but the story begins long before that, with tally marks on rock and bone surviving from the Stone Age. Here is the essential guide to mathematics, an authoritative reference book and timeline that explores the work of history's greatest mathematicians. From the teasing genius of Pierre de Fermat, who said he knew the answers but rarely gave them up, to the fractal pattern discovered by Waclaw Sierpinski now used to plan the route a mailman takes, here are 100 landmark moments in this intensely rigorous discipline, seen through the eyes of the people who lived them. Glimpse the abstract landscape of infinite numbers and multi-dimensional shapes as you learn about the most famous math men of all. Pythagoras had a love of numbers so strong it led to a violent death. Then there is Fibonacci, whose guide for bookkeepers changed the way we add and Descartes, who took inspiration from a fly to convert numbers into shapes and back again, changing math forever. Over many centuries, great minds puzzled over the evidence and, step-by-step, edged ever closer to the truth. Behind every one of these breakthrough moments there's a story about a confounding puzzle that became a discovery and changed the way we see the world. Here are one hundred of the most significant and we call these Ponderables. In Mathematics: An Illustrated History of Numbers, you'll get a peak into the Imponderables, too, the mysteries yet to be solved that will one day lead great thinkers forward to an even greater understanding of the universe. Includes a removable fold-out concertina neatly housed in the back of the book. This fold-out provides a 12-page Timeline History of Mathematics that embeds the story in historical context and shows Who Did What When at a glance. The reverse side features some of the greatest mathematical enigmas and interesting facts about the world of numbers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

So I hated math in school, but my husband recently decided that it was time to get over phobias and gave me this book as an early Christmas present. You know, there was nothing to be afraid of, and I should have made friends with math long ago. The main thing I discovered from this absolutely Gorgeous book is that there is so much more to math than 2 plus 2 or even algebra or Trig. You have got to know that it was Trig that really turned me off for good years ago. The author is terrific, and makes reading the 100 little stories - he calls them BREAKTHROUGHS - like eating candy. You can't stop. The only complaint i have is that this book came just a few years too late. I might be teaching math at MIT now. Seriously no kidding I liked this book, and I like math more now. I love the cover, it has lots of geometry shapes. There is also a timeline if you want to see it all at ONE glance. FUN.

My dad is an engineer and a self-professed math geek. I got him this book to feed his obsession. He loved it! He would not put it down at Christmas. He kept talking about all of the theorems and everything and about how much he loved this book.

"Mathematics: An Illustrated History of Numbers (100 Ponderables) is an excellent popularization book on Math. Each of 100 ideas included from the very basic integers, how did we begin counting to chaos, to many of the marvelous theorems and variety of types and kinds of numbers is well, briefly and mostly nontechy explained in one or two page essays and diagrams. There are wonderful illustrations of people, things, machines, graphs, and concepts. The section at the end with brief biographies of many famous mathematicians is fascinating and makes clear why they are famous. This is an excellent gift from the math lover of any age in your family. It will introduce the high school student in your family to the wonders and fascinating challenges of math over the centuries.

It will explain many of the occasional news stories from the world of mathematics that occasionally break through. It will even help many with math phobia to overcome their fears of math. Of the several popularizations of math I have read over my years, this is one of the best. It is an excellent buy and addition to my library.

The book had a LOT more in it than I expected and lots of fun trivia. It was purchased as a gift for a girl loving math and it was a hit...I must admit I was tempted to keep it for myself -) You do NOT have to be good at math to enjoy this book...so a winner all around.

Building up a motivational library for my daughter. Enjoyed the books so much, I bought the entire series after initial purchase of *The Elements*. Perfectly illustrated and short enough for those with developing attention spans. Subjective further study may be called for at a later stage, but this is a great way to foster the will to do so.... Love it, sincerely...

We do not often buy coffee table style books as I find them a little large to leaf through, but this book is beautiful and was totally worth it. My 12 year old is passionate about math, and this book will be fun for him to go through. My favorite feature of it, which was a wonderful surprise, is a folded up "world history timeline" in the back of the book that you can pull out to see what was happening concurrently in the world with different mathematical discoveries. It is delightful!

I love the included poster that lines up the mathematical developments with the scientific revolutions, culture, and historical events so you can better understand the big picture when going through all 100 significant discoveries in math. Fun to look through!

My son (8) who LOVES to read but does not like to do math loves to read this book. :)

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