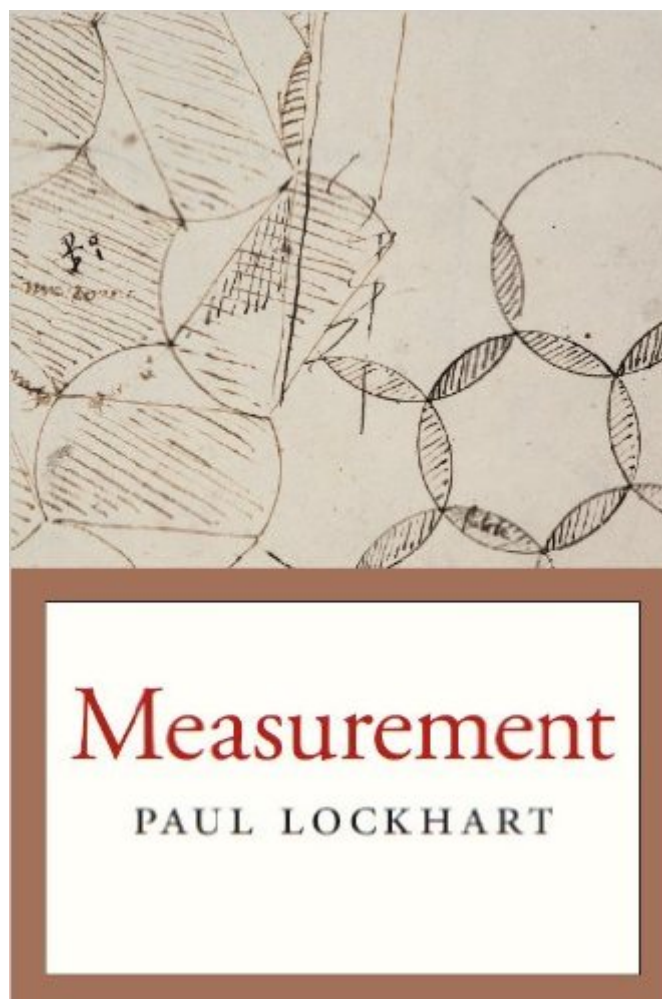


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# Measurement



## Synopsis

Lockhart's Mathematician's Lament outlined how we introduce math to students in the wrong way. Measurement explains how math should be done. With plain English and pictures, he makes complex ideas about shape and motion intuitive and graspable, and offers a solution to math phobia by introducing us to math as an artful way of thinking and living.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Lockhart's enthusiasm and humor shows through on every page of this book, as he makes cheerful battle with fundamental ideas. Too often we teach dead & dry facts, and leave creativity as an exercise for the reader, if we mention it at all. Measurement's primary subject is that intuition and creativity, spelling out tricks and tools that creative mathematicians use to cope, and the joy in it that keeps them going: Keep asking questions! They are more important than answers. Prove something more than one way. Can you generalize? Pay attention to symmetry, wherever you find it. Guess. Then guess again. Get used to being stuck.

I am now half way through this book and it is one of the best books explaining the process of mathematical thinking that I have ever read. It explains in plain English lots of interesting and basic mathematical theorems, many of them geometrical, without obscuring them in a blizzard of algebra. Even though the author decries depending on diagrams as proofs, there are lots of very clear and helpful hand drawn diagrams which make various concepts clear. Yes, there are algebraic formulas but they are germane to the subjects being discussed and are not inserted just to make the author look good.

This is a great math book even for people who don't think they are good at math. When I watched the video of this guy talking about the subject I thought I would give it a try. The book is great because the author breaks down the subject into simple concepts that even I could understand. So far I have only read the first chapter. The book discusses the deep philosophical thoughts in math, for example what is a proof?. The first chapter discusses geometry. I recommend this book to any one who want to develop an love for the subject.

I will only say this: if I had this book and this teacher in my High School curriculum, I would have majored in math. I cried tears of awe reading this book. The man is writing poetry with mathematics. Don't think it can be done? Read this book and lament on the fact that you were deprived of this art-form. If you are a parent, consider providing inspiration for all the hard work in your kids math classes with this book as a guide. Start reading and enjoy the journey into the jungle where odd creatures behave in all kind of interesting patterns for us to explore!

If you only ever read one book on mathematics in your life, read this. Paul Lockhart writes so clearly and passionately. (Yes, I used "passion" and "math" together!) He is a brilliant mathematician AND a great writer! This is a very rare combination. He presents math in an intuitive and conceptual way that shows you the beauty of discovery and patterns and symmetry but requires very little calculation or knowledge of the mathematical language. For non-math people this presentation is very accessible and easy to read. He is talking about concepts that are universal. For math-people to presentation style is a reinforcement of why you love math, do math, and a demonstration of how you really think when you are solving a problem. I highly, highly recommend this book!

Read this with a pencil and paper beside you so you can do the problems and draw diagrams for yourself. The book isn't easy. It gives a non-mathematician an insight into how the math guy thinks

and its fascinating. How many degrees are there in a pentagon? I loved the book, I'm reading it for the second time.

Mr. Lockhart has previously written (A Mathematician's Lament) about the joyless methods that were used to teach most of us mathematics. Fortunately I was one who found the joy behind both the practical significance of arithmetic (yes the bank needs to know the exact balance of your account even if you don't care to figure it out) and the memorization of tables; now called math facts (yes, even musicians need to practice scales and train their fingers if they wish to make music, not just appreciate it). If you already know how joyful and remarkable mathematics can be, Mr. Lockhart writes in a way that is easy to read and offers many examples of familiar problems and solves them in a way that emphasizes the elegance and beauty of both the problem and its solution. If you wonder WHY some of us KNOW that mathematics is elegant and beautiful and wish to share that joy, give the book a whirl. You don't need to know more about mathematics than basic arithmetic. As long as you know that algebra and geometry exist; expertise is not required, you will do fine. However as easy as it is to read, be warned that sometimes the mathematics and logic will appear so clearly as if by magic and other times your brain will be challenged and you may struggle mentally as mightily as a woman struggles physically (and mentally) to give birth. Whether the struggle is worth it is entirely up to you and fortunately for you, unlike the woman who cannot undo her pregnancy if she finds the struggle to give birth too difficult, you can just give up and read on to the next problem and hope it is easier. There are many, many problems to solve in the book.

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