

Timothy Gowers

# MATHEMATICS

A Very Short Introduction

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# Mathematics A Very Short Introduction

**Jacqueline Stedall**



## **Mathematics A Very Short Introduction:**

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Applied Mathematics Alain Goriely, 2018-02-13 Mathematics is playing an increasing important role in society and the sciences enhancing our ability to use models and handle data While pure mathematics is mostly interested in abstract structures applied mathematics sits at the interface between this abstract world and the world in which we live This area of mathematics takes its nourishment from society and science and in turn provides a unified way to understand problems arising in diverse fields This Very Short Introduction presents a compact yet comprehensive view of the field of applied mathematics and explores its relationships with pure mathematics science and engineering Explaining the nature of applied mathematics Alain Goriely discusses its early achievements in physics and engineering and its development as a separate field after World War II Using historical examples current applications and challenges Goriely illustrates the particular role that mathematics plays in the modern sciences today and its far reaching potential

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Number Theory Robin Wilson, 2020-05-28 Number theory is the branch of mathematics that is primarily concerned with the counting numbers Of particular importance are the prime numbers the building blocks of our number system The subject is an old one dating back over two millennia to the ancient Greeks and for many years has been studied for its intrinsic beauty and elegance not least because several of its challenges are so easy to state that everyone can understand them and yet no one has ever been able to resolve them But number theory has also recently become of great practical importance in the area of cryptography where the security of your credit card and indeed of the nation's defence depends on a result concerning prime numbers that dates back to the 18th century Recent years have witnessed other spectacular developments such as Andrew Wiles's proof of Fermat's last theorem unproved for over 250 years and some exciting work on prime numbers In this Very Short Introduction Robin Wilson introduces the main areas of classical number theory both ancient and modern Drawing on the work of many of the greatest mathematicians of the past such as Euclid Fermat Euler and Gauss he situates some of the most interesting and creative problems in the area in their historical context

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practised and understood in a multitude of ways indeed mathematical ideas themselves are far from being fixed but are adapted and changed by their passage across periods and cultures In this Very Short Introduction Jacqueline Stedall explores the rich historical and cultural diversity of mathematical endeavour from the distant past to the present day Arranged thematically to exemplify the varied contexts in which people have learned used and handed on mathematics she also includes illustrative case studies drawn from a range of times and places including early imperial China the medieval Islamic world and nineteenth century Britain ABOUT THE SERIES The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area These pocket sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly Our expert authors combine facts analysis perspective new ideas and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable

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**Trigonometry** Glen Van Brummelen, 2020-01-23 Born of the desire to understand the workings of motions of the heavenly bodies trigonometry gave the ancient Greeks the ability to predict their futures Most of what we see of the subject in school comes from these heavenly origins 15th century astronomer Regiomontanus called it the foot of

the ladder to the stars In this Very Short Introduction Glen Van Brummelen shows how trigonometry connects mathematics to science and has today become an indispensable tool in predicting cyclic patterns like animal populations and ocean tides Its historical journey through major cultures such as medieval India and the Islamic World has taken it through disciplines such as geography and even religious practice Trigonometry has also been a major player in the most startling mathematical developments of the modern world Its interactions with the concept of infinity led to Taylor and Fourier series some of the most practical tools of modern science The birth of complex numbers led to a shocking union of exponential and trigonometric functions creating the most beautiful formulas and powerful modelling tools in science Finally as Van Brummelen shows trigonometry allows us to explore the strange new worlds of non Euclidean geometries opening up bizarre possibilities for the shape of space itself And indeed one of those new geometries spherical takes us full circle back to ancient Greek astronomers and European navigators who first used it to chart their ways across the heavens and the earth ABOUT THE SERIES The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area These pocket sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly Our expert authors combine facts analysis perspective new ideas and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable

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Priest shows how wrong this conception is. He explores the philosophical roots of the subject explaining how modern formal logic deals with issues ranging from the existence of God and the reality of time to paradoxes of probability and decision theory. Along the way the basics of formal logic are explained in simple non technical terms showing that logic is a powerful and exciting part of modern philosophy.

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*Probability* John Haigh, 2012-04-26 Making good decisions under conditions of uncertainty which is the norm requires a sound appreciation of the way random chance works. As analysis and modelling of most aspects of the world and all measurement are necessarily imprecise and involve uncertainties of varying degrees, the understanding and management of probabilities is central to much work in the sciences and economics. In this Very Short Introduction John Haigh introduces the ideas of probability and different philosophical approaches to probability and gives a brief account of the history of development of probability theory from Galileo and Pascal to Bayes, Laplace, Poisson and Markov. He describes the basic probability distributions and goes on to discuss a wide range of applications in science, economics and a variety of other contexts such as games and betting. He concludes with an intriguing discussion of coincidences and some curious paradoxes.

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*Infinity* Ian Stewart, 2017-03-13 Infinity is an intriguing topic with connections to religion, philosophy, metaphysics, logic and physics as well as mathematics. Its history goes back to ancient times with especially important contributions from Euclid, Aristotle, Eudoxus and Archimedes. The infinitely large, the infinite, is intimately related to the infinitely small, the infinitesimal. Cosmologists consider sweeping questions about whether space and time are infinite. Philosophers and mathematicians ranging from Zeno to Russell have posed numerous paradoxes about infinity and infinitesimals. Many vital areas of mathematics rest upon some version of infinity. The most obvious and the first context in which major new techniques depended on formulating infinite processes is calculus. But there are many others, for example Fourier analysis and fractals. In this Very Short Introduction Ian Stewart discusses infinity in mathematics while also drawing in the various other aspects of infinity and explaining some of the major problems and insights arising from this concept. He argues that working with infinity is not just an abstract intellectual exercise but that it

is instead a concept with important practical everyday applications and considers how mathematicians use infinity and infinitesimals to answer questions or supply techniques that do not appear to involve the infinite

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**Combinatorics** Robin Wilson, 2016-04-28 How many possible sudoku puzzles are there In the lottery what is the chance that two winning balls have consecutive numbers Who invented Pascal's triangle it was not Pascal Combinatorics the branch of mathematics concerned with selecting arranging and listing or counting collections of objects works to answer all these questions Dating back some 3000 years and initially consisting mainly of the study of permutations and combinations its scope has broadened to include topics such as graph theory partitions of numbers block designs design of codes and latin squares In this Very Short Introduction Robin Wilson gives an overview of the field and its applications in mathematics and computer theory considering problems from the shortest routes covering certain stops to the minimum number of colours needed to colour a map with different colours for neighbouring countries

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#### **Fourth International Handbook of Mathematics Education**

M.A. (Ken) Clements, Berinderjeet Kaur, Thomas Lowrie, Vilma Mesa, Johan Prytz, 2024-11-19 This fourth international handbook discusses developments not recognized or dealt with fully in the first three Springer Mathematics Education handbooks and tackles controversial issues in the field After starting with a provocative introductory chapter which asks whether controversy is a healthy feature of international mathematics education the four following sections cover a mathematics education in Asia b the roles of theory in research and practice c equity and social justice and d curriculum and change These themes are taken up in 28 chapters by 60 authoritative authors from all continents Each of the four sections is structured on the basis of past present and future aspects Like the first three mathematics education handbooks this handbook provides a very valuable resource for teachers mathematics education practitioners and researchers education policy makers and mathematicians as well as graduate and undergraduate students *Borders in Mathematics Pre-Service Teacher Education* Nenad Radakovic, Limin Jao, 2020-05-22 This book examines the current state of the field of mathematics pre service teacher education through the theme of borders Borders are ubiquitous they can be used to define classify



organize make sense of and or group There are many ways that the concept of a border illuminates the field of mathematics pre service teacher education Consequently there are a multitude of responses to these borders researchers and practitioners question challenge cross blur and erase them Chapters include the following topics explorations of mathematics across topics e g geometry algebra probability and with other disciplines e g science the arts social sciences challenging gender cultural and racial borders exploring the structure and curriculum of teacher education programs spaces inhabited by teacher education programs e g university community and international collaborations and programs to promote cross cultural sharing and learning The book targets a readership of researchers and graduate students in integrated education studies teacher education practitioners of mathematics education curriculum developers and educational administrators and policy makers

**Research in History and Philosophy of Mathematics** Maria Zack, Elaine Landry, 2016-12-15 This volume contains seventeen papers that were presented at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society for History and Philosophy of Mathematics La Soci t Canadienne d Histoire et de Philosophie des Math matiques held in Washington D C In addition to showcasing rigorously reviewed modern scholarship on an interesting variety of general topics in the history and philosophy of mathematics this meeting also honored the memories of Jacqueline Jackie Stedall and Ivor Grattan Guinness celebrated the Centennial of the Mathematical Association of America and considered the importance of mathematical communities in a special session These themes and many others are explored in these collected papers which cover subjects such as New evidence that the Latin translation of Euclid s Elements was based on the Arabic version attributed to al ajj j Work done on the arc rampant in the seventeenth century The history of numerical methods for finding roots of nonlinear equations An original play featuring a dialogue between George Boole and Augustus De Morgan that explores the relationship between them Key issues in the digital preservation of mathematical material for future generations A look at the first twenty five years of The American Mathematical Monthly in the context of the evolving American mathematical community The growth of Math Circles and the unique ways they are being implemented in the United States Written by leading scholars in the field these papers will be accessible to not only mathematicians and students of the history and philosophy of mathematics but also anyone with a general interest in mathematics

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