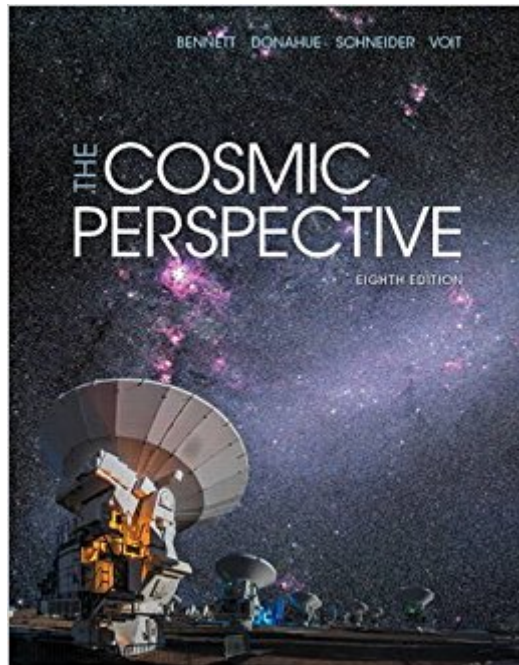


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Customer Reviews

I would rate book 4/5 due to the poor quality of the paperback cover, but the information in the book is so good I have to rate it a 5/5. I wish this book was a hardcover because I'm planning on keeping it the rest of my life, but the paperback cover quality is very poor. The quality of the pages and ink are very good though. I would highly recommend this book for anyone interested in our universe. Anyways, I used this textbook for my Introduction to Astronomy course. This textbook is great in explaining concepts with only basic math (for a simple derivation of Einstein's Special Relativity, you only need to remember highschool geometry). The 1st chapter of the book is absolutely mindblowing as it ventures into the vast scale of the universe. The 3rd chapter, which address the nature of science, is well-written to give you a feel for how the scientific method works (everyone should read this section because there are so many misconceptions about the scientific method). The 2nd part of the book goes into key concepts mandatory for astronomy. These sections will be harder for people without a scientific background (i.e. those not in a science or engineering major). A lot of the students in the class struggled during these chapters not due to the mathematics, but due to the amount of information present in these chapters. What I learned during 3 years of physics and engineering is shrunk down to 3 compact chapters. But the authors do their best job to simplify concepts, and these sections were really fun to read. These chapters will show you how beautiful physics really is, and more importantly will set the foundation for the rest of the book. Parts 3-7 will be the most interesting parts of the book (about 20 chapters total), depending on which subfield you enjoy.

I love this book! I don't even read text books very often, but this one is one of the most fun text books I've ever read--the fourth edition of "The Essential Cosmic Perspective." Perhaps I say this because I like Astronomy. I've never taken the course before, so this is really the only college text book in this subject I've looked at. Still, everything in here is interesting. It has been updated with the most recent expansions with two notable points. It contains the most recent alterations of language by the International Astronomical Union (IAU). Did you know that Pluto isn't a planet? It's actually a comet! In August of 2006, the IAU changed the definition of planet to account for the differences of the planet Pluto, an object whose composition recently discovered is essentially the same as a comet from the belt of comets just outside of the Solar system: called "the Kuiper belt (pronounced like "vipir," but with a K. In 2006, the IAU changed the designation of Pluto to a new category of Solar body: the dwarf planet. Dwarf planets are not planets, as the definition of a planet now has a finer meaning, changed by the IAU. Planet designations are based on composition and size: the inner four planets--Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars--are referred to as "terrestrial planets," because their compositions are made up mostly of metal and rock, they're all about the same size, and they have two moons or less. Asteroids also have the composition of rock and metal, and so the belt of asteroids lying just outside of Mars gives an interesting connotation about our system which I will explain soon.

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