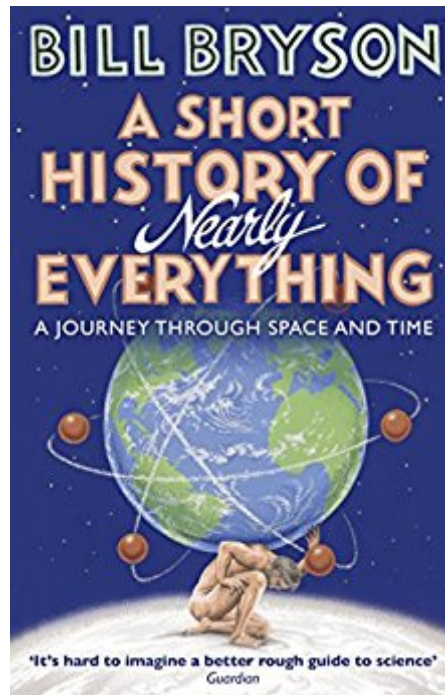


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# A Short History Of Nearly Everything (Bryson)



## Synopsis

Bill Bryson describes himself as a reluctant traveller, but even when he stays safely at home he can't contain his curiosity about the world around him. *A Short History of Nearly Everything* is his quest to understand everything that has happened from the Big Bang to the rise of civilization - how we got from there, being nothing at all, to here, being us. Bill Bryson's challenge is to take subjects that normally bore the pants off most of us, like geology, chemistry and particle physics, and see if there isn't some way to render them comprehensible to people who have never thought they could be interested in science. The ultimate eye-opening journey through time and space, *A Short History of Nearly Everything* is the biggest-selling popular science book of the 21st century, and reveals the world in a way most of us have never seen it before.

## Book Information

File Size: 2927 KB

Print Length: 692 pages

Publisher: Transworld Digital (January 23, 2010)

Publication Date: March 2, 2010

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B0035OC7VI

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #56,289 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #7

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Science > Physics > Molecular Physics #13

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Science > Earth Sciences > Geology #14

in Books > Science & Math > Physics > Molecular Physics

## Customer Reviews

A friend of mine recommended this book knowing that I like science. I'm used to reading about the sciences in single topics. This book surprised me in the amount of effort the author took to go through book after book of different sciences, both old and new, and proceeded to connect the dots

into several cohesive stories about our home, planet Earth, and its residents. The biggest surprise is how little we truly know about both and just how much luck was involved that both exist in their present form. This book is an easy read and should be understandable to anyone who has a basic interest in science. Be prepared though to being overwhelmed because there is a lot of information in this book, with references to other works. This book is best read in sections allowing yourself some time to think about what you have learned; and I'm sure you are going to learn at least a few things. I highly recommend this book to anyone who would like to understand what an amazing place our planet is and life that exists on it.

A phenomenal book. Like the title suggests, it touches upon a little of everything. As someone with a broad interest in almost all subjects, reading this book was an absolute joy and Bill Bryson's delightful wit is an added bonus. He has a way of making the driest of subjects seem interesting and you find yourself flipping page after page, totally absorbed by the topics he presents. LOVE this book- do yourself a favor and get it!

This is a very informative and interesting book that summarizes the origins of the universe in an intelligible way. A college education with some knowledge of the sciences would be helpful, but aren't an absolute requirement. (My three degrees are in Economics and it's been 50+ years since I have taken any science courses, but for the most part I was able to follow along.) I even understand The Big Bang Theory TV show a bit better now.

Just little outdated for today's science progress (especially in physics), but many fundamental theories and history are solid (especially in biology and chemistry) and well explained. Only problem is that I bought a kindle version and whenever the book tries to use tenth to the power to describe very small number (decimal), there is no negative sign (eg to describe a fraction of a second the book uses  $5 \times 10^{1,000,000}$  second instead of  $5 \times 10^{-1,000,000}$ )

ABSOLUTELY GREAT BOOK!!! And I don't read books. I Keep buying up every hard cover I can find as everyone I've given as gift wants to know where to get one to give as gift. I think I've given 50 or more of these as client gifts. Cool thing is you don't read front to back...just read the interesting chapters/topics. super easy and entertaining read filled with facts you will try to remember so you can impress your friends,,,and YOU WILL! Can read over and over and understand topics like genetics, DNA, the moon, our country, wars, desalinization of oceans etc. not

a green peace book just VERY WELL WRITTEN and best book of my life,

Most of Bill Bryson's books - usually involving travel - are a delight. But I have the idea he must be proudest of this one in praise of science rather than corruption politicians or unproveable gods. For we ordinary people who have no idea how a television works let alone an atom, we get a glimpse of the way both the universe and our planet really works. I had no idea that my body - and yours too - contains trillions of atoms and even more smaller things such as protons and quarks. Collectively they enable us to live for a certain amount of time and then - all too soon - they ruthlessly leave us and find something else to make. We are all a product of our universe, the same stuff of our stars and galaxies. Here today and gone tomorrow. "Out Out Brief Candle" as Shakespeare so elegantly wrote. You should buy this book for your children and grandchildren and even your best friends who may still be wondering why we are here -and be thankful for it.

This book is quite different from Bryson's usual fare. Here Bryson steps out of his usual travel and language focus to write about science. The product is an interesting combination of the social history of science, biographies of famous scientists, and discussion of significant scientific discoveries in very accessible language. What science does Bryson cover, you might ask? This is where "everything" comes in to the picture. Bryson has chosen a wide range of scientific discoveries, from working out the theory of evolution to discovering the size and shape of the earth. Mostly, Bryson focuses on the largest and smallest things in the universe. He looks at galaxies and volcanoes, but also DNA and atoms. Truly, this book is expansive. For the lay reader, it becomes clear that there's a tremendous amount of knowledge tied up in this book, and it's amazing just how much Bryson had to learn to write it. For the non-scientist, this book manages to create a sense of awe, wonder, and fear, all at the same time. Bryson does an excellent job of highlighting just how surprising and contingent the fact of our existence is, and how complicated it was to get here. He creates amazement as the reader is forced to consider almost unfathomable dimensions, both gargantuan and tiny. Contingency is clearly the most significant theme that emerges from the work. Bryson also paints an interesting portrait of the practice of science, scientific culture, and a sense of just how difficult and tenuous some conclusions are. While it's amazing just how much scientists have discovered, it's even more daunting to consider how much remains inconclusive. Overall, this is an extremely accessible discussion of some difficult topics, infused with Bryson's humor and style. It's a long read, but well worth the effort.

The bonus to reading this book is you get to learn a lot about human limitations and potential. As a species we have a lot to be ashamed of but a lot to be proud of as well. There's a lot of ground covered here. I was only able to get through one or two chapters at a time but I always looked forward to picking it up again.

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