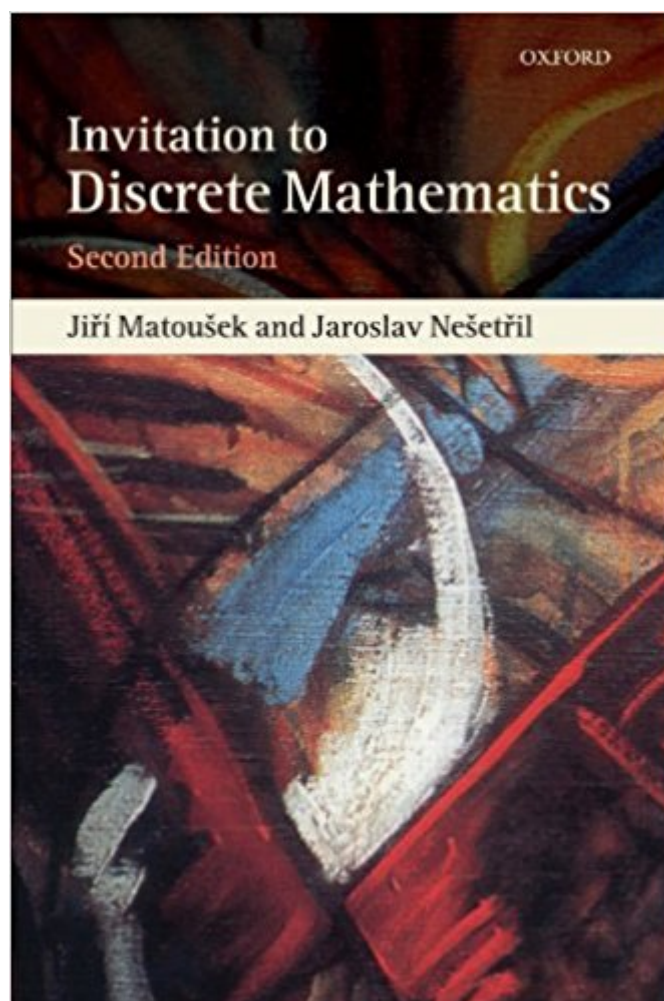


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An Invitation To Discrete Mathematics



Synopsis

This book is a clear and self-contained introduction to discrete mathematics. Aimed mainly at undergraduate and early graduate students of mathematics and computer science. It is written with the goal of stimulating interest in mathematics and an active, problem-solving approach to the presented material. The reader is led to an understanding of the basic principles and methods of actually doing mathematics (and having fun at that). Being more narrowly focused than many discrete mathematics textbooks and treating selected topics in an unusual depth and from several points of view, the book reflects the conviction of the authors, active and internationally renowned mathematicians, that the most important gain from studying mathematics is the cultivation of clear and logical thinking and habits useful for attacking new problems. More than 400 enclosed exercises with a wide range of difficulty, many of them accompanied by hints for solution, support this approach to teaching. The readers will appreciate the lively and informal style of the text accompanied by more than 200 drawings and diagrams. Specialists in various parts of science with a basic mathematical education wishing to apply discrete mathematics in their field can use the book as a useful source, and even experts in combinatorics may occasionally learn from pointers to research literature or from presentations of recent results. *Invitation to Discrete Mathematics* should make a delightful reading both for beginners and for mathematical professionals. The main topics include: elementary counting problems, asymptotic estimates, partially ordered sets, basic graph theory and graph algorithms, finite projective planes, elementary probability and the probabilistic method, generating functions, Ramsey's theorem, and combinatorial applications of linear algebra. General mathematical notions going beyond the high-school level are thoroughly explained in the introductory chapter. An appendix summarizes the undergraduate algebra needed in some of the more advanced sections of the book.

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Customer Reviews

Review from previous edition: "The book is a self-contained introduction to discrete mathematics, and in particular to combinatorics and graph theory. It is aimed at undergraduate and early graduate students and encourages an active, problem-solving approach to the material. The book treats selected topics in unusual depth and from several points of view." --Zentralblatt für Didaktik der Mathematik "...a far-from-traditional textbook and...a joy to read. The text is lucid and sprinkled with small jokes and background stories." --Times Higher Education Supplement, Friday 26th November 1999

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Jiri Matousek received his PhD in Mathematics from the Charles University in Prague in 1990 and is now Professor of Computer Science at Charles University Prague. He has held several visiting positions at universities in the U.S., Germany, Switzerland, Japan, and other countries. Humboldt Research Fellow in 1992 (Free University Berlin). Prize for Young Mathematicians of the 2nd European Congress of Mathematics in Budapest in 1996, speaker at the ICM 1998. Jaroslav Nešetřil received his PhD from the Charles University in Prague in 1975 and is now Professor of Mathematics at Charles University Prague. He has held several visiting positions abroad (U.S.A., Canada, Germany). Currently he is the head of the Centre for Theoretical Computer Science (ITI) at Charles University and the director of the international center for Discrete Mathematics, Theoretical Computer Science and Their Applications (DIMATIA).

"An Invitation to Discrete Mathematics" is an excellent textbook for college students, advanced high school students, and curious post-grads like myself. The text is engaging and clear, and the content reveals much of the wonderful capabilities of mathematics for a broad variety of sub-disciplines.

I like discrete math so I really liked this book. Good layout. Clear proofs. Provocative exercise questions. It was in good condition.

Worst math textbook for undergrad. No example, no trivial example, the exercises doesn't have solution and very hard to solve. This is textbook should be used for grad level.

Book arrived as described and on time.

I cannot speak for the English version, which seems to be somewhat lacking in quality of translation, but the Czech version is very engaging and I can highly recommend it for any undergraduate student interested in discrete mathematics.

As another student mentioned, this textbook does not contain a single example. Only definition, statement of theorem, and rigorous proof. This book has minimal emphasis on applications and contains poorly written explanation of stated questions. If you are an instructor, please avoid this book for teaching. Students cannot read this textbook and make sense of it. The math department at our university selected this textbook unfortunately.

If you expect to find only dull books on the subject of discrete mathematics then try this one. When I was a child there were always the most hilarious Czech TV series on Children's television. One was called Pan Tau. This series was about a bowler hat wearing genius Alphons Urban living under the roof top of his brother's family's house in a Prague suburb. Alphons was an ordinary human. But he had a double: a small doll named Pan Tau which could, when twisting its hat, turn into a real life Alphons lookalike. Pan Tau, of course had suprahuman abilities, and he could play a lot of tricks to the nuisance of his real life equivalent Alphons, who had always a hard time to keep the existence of his mute supranatural lookalike a secret. In particular Alphons' niece and nephew were always amazed by their uncle's "practicality"..... Professors Matousek's and Nešetřil's book is like Pan Tau -- it always finds the right answer to otherwise intractable (mathematical) problems. Discrete mathematics can be extremely tough at times, but with Pan Tau's little genius incorporated into this book, suddenly Discrete Mathematics turns out to be extremely funny. Anyway, there is nothing but praise to spare for this most brilliant and witty book guiding the reader through the pitfalls of mathematics rendering her/him, like myself, a proficient connoisseur of discrete math.

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.Professor Matousek and Professor Nesetril's book is like Pan Tau's double -- as it always finds the right answer to otherwise intractable situations. Discrete mathematics can be extremely tough at times, but with Pan Tau's double's little genius incorporated in this book suddenly Discrete Mathematics turns out to be extremely funny. Anyway there is nothing but praise to spare for this most brilliant book guiding the reader through the pitfalls of mathematics rendering her/him, like myself, a proficient connoisseur of discrete math.

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