



Symmetry: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

Ian Stewart

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Symmetry is an immensely important concept in mathematics and throughout the sciences. In this *Very Short Introduction*, Ian Stewart demonstrates symmetry's deep implications, showing how it even plays a major role in the current search to unify relativity and quantum theory. Stewart, a respected mathematician as well as a widely known popular-science and science-fiction writer, brings to this volume his deep knowledge of the subject and his gift for conveying science to general readers with clarity and humor. He describes how symmetry's applications range across the entire field of mathematics and how symmetry governs the structure of crystals, innumerable types of pattern formation, and how systems change their state as parameters vary. Symmetry is also highly visual, with applications that include animal markings, locomotion, evolutionary biology, elastic buckling, waves, the shape of the Earth, and the form of galaxies. Fundamental physics is governed by symmetries in the laws of nature--Einstein's point that the laws should be the same at all locations and all times.

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