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Mathematical Models



Synopsis

This is the classic book of detailed instructions for making a wide variety of mathematical models of all kinds. Complete nets are given for all regular Archimedean and stellated polyhedra together with a number of interesting compounds. There are sections on paper folding, dissections, curve stitching, linkages, the drawing of loci and envelopes and the construction of plane tessellations. The volume is fully illustrated with diagrams and photographs of models in paper and other materials and all have been successfully made and tested. First in the Tarquin Reprint series

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Customer Reviews

This title came up as a recommendation when I was searching for Wenninger's books on polyhedra. Those books are available, but rather pricey (over \$60); I saw Cundy's book and bought it somewhat impulsively to console myself. What luck! It turns out to be much broader in scope than Wenninger's or other books on polyhedra; Cundy is using the word "model" very broadly to describe any number of concrete objects that can be used to "model" mathematical ideas. He describes (and provides clear diagrams) for making cutout cards to demonstrate geometric theorems; a mechanical device which can be used to demonstrate trigonometric functions; ways of drawing or using string to create conic sections, parabolas; and so on. He goes into tessellations, knot theory, and even describes plane figures by Von Koch and Sierpinski - and this written a couple of decades before Mandelbrot brought these figures to a wider audience and named them "fractals". Cundy's chapter on polyhedra is quite thorough, and though he does give explicit instructions on building models, he is perhaps a little more academic than some readers would like. For a book solely focused on

building polyhedral models, I'd recommend the reprinted "Shapes, Space, and Symmetry" by Alan Holden; I've had it for years and have used it to build several beautiful models. But Cundy's book offers the possibility of enjoying a broader range of mathematical ideas in the same concrete way as building polyhedra. Later chapters, for instance, describe ways of building mechanical devices to create complex three-dimensional curves, and the last chapter describes simple electrical circuits that embody principles of Boolean logic, demonstrating in turn the fundamentals of modern computing.

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